

# JOURNEYS WITH JERRY THE JARVEY

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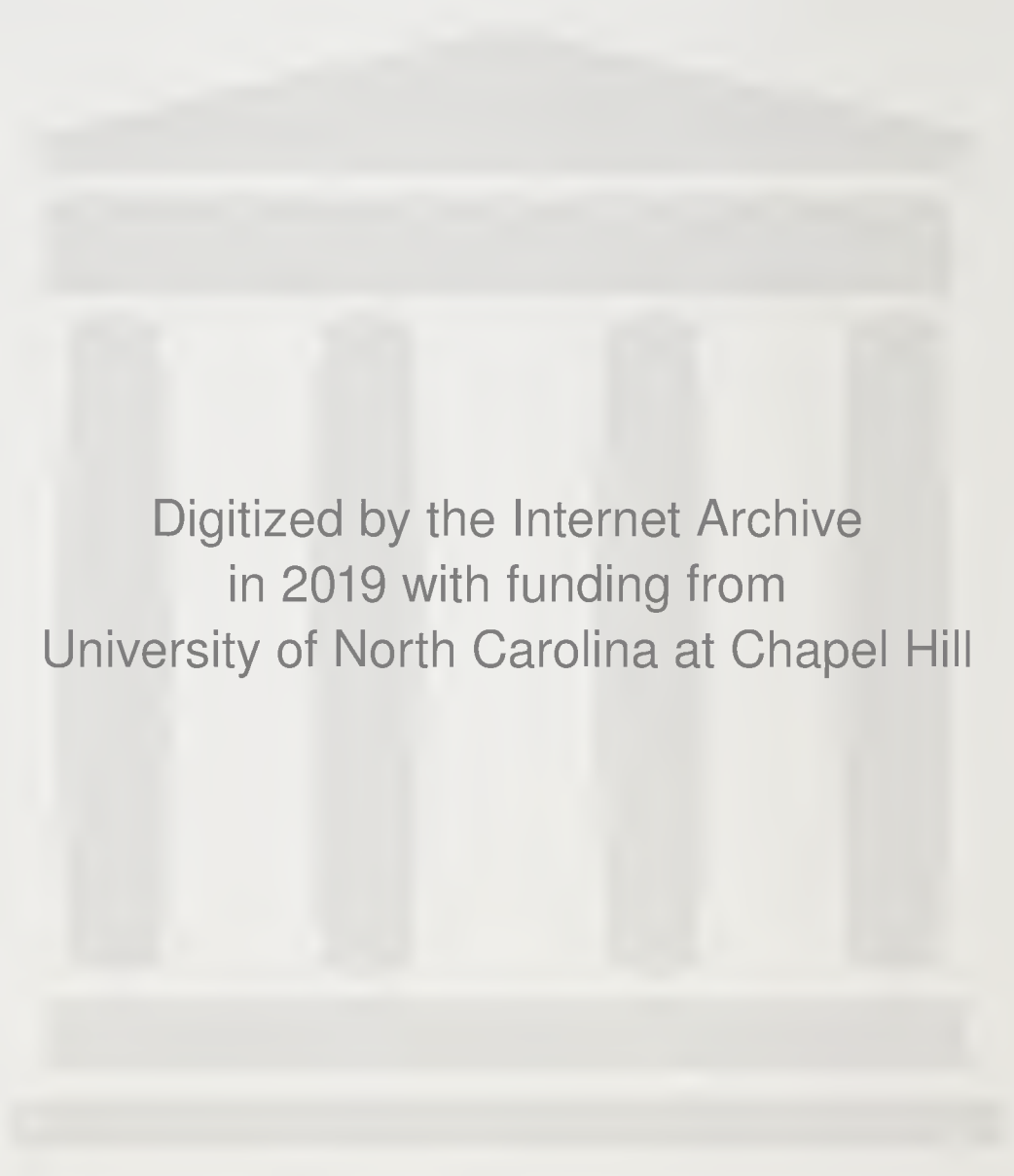
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JOURNEYS WITH  
JERRY THE JARVEY





# JOURNEYS WITH JERRY THE JARVEY

BY  
ALEXIS ROCHE

LONDON  
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET, W.

1915

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# JOURNEYS WITH JERRY THE JARVEY

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

MUCH water has run under the bridge since I took my first drive with Jerry. He was then a middle-aged man, while I was but a boy fresh from school with my first cheque-book burning a hole in my pocket. Although it represented but a very modest sum at the Bank, it gave me a sense of my own importance which I had never had before, I felt that I was at last a man and not only a man but a sportsman. Was I not about to buy my first hunter? It is true that I had ridden ponies and horses all my life, but they had been provided by my elders and betters in the same way as all the other necessities of life. Now I was driving alone—this was the great point—on my own hired car, with my own cheque-book in my pocket, to buy a horse entirely

on my own judgment and responsibility. Many years' experience of Jerry and of his extreme shrewdness tell me now that he must have sized me up before we had driven the first mile, but he played up to me like the finished actor that he is.

"I beg your Honour's pardon," said he, "but if you don't like Maloney's little mare" (emphasis on the little) "I think I know what will suit you. I hard him sayin' th' other day that she was so sober in herself, that he often took an umbrella to a funeral on her an' kem home dry when the rest of the party would be drowned wet. 'Tisn't likely that your Honour would ever want to do the like of that."

Instantly Maloney's chance of selling me the little mare was for ever extinguished.

"The horse I was thinkin' about," continued he, "mightn't suit you afther all. He's a terrible big-lepped horse, an' although your Honour has an arm on you like a blacksmith" (it was more like a gas pipe) "he might pull too hard for you."

I forthwith decided that nothing but broken knees or blindness should prevent me from becoming the owner of the brute, lest Jerry should

think I was afraid to ride him. We never even went through the form of calling on Mr. Maloney, but drove fifteen miles (the bill for which came to as many shillings) to see the "big-lepped" horse, only to find that it had been sold a month previously.

Angry and disappointed as I was at the time, I have never since regretted that long drive. It was the commencement of a life-long friendship, during which I have gathered much knowledge of my neighbours, rich and poor, as well as endless amusement.

In appearance, Jerry is a short, stoutly-built man with sandy hair and the face of a comedian. He has the remarkable gift of being able to laugh most heartily with his small grey eyes, while every other feature retains the gravity of a mute at a funeral. He much prefers having but one passenger at a time on his side-car, as he can then sit on the opposite side and carry on a conversation with comfort, with two passengers he is obliged to sit on the driving seat with his back to his audience. If it is ever your lot to engage him for a long drive, I would



advise you to engage another car for your companion, if you have one ; the extra money will be well spent on the entertainment you will get from Jerry. He once gave me another reason for preferring an audience of one. " There's many a thing I'd say to your Honour alone, that I wouldn't say before a witness."

As time went on and I became an old customer, his conversation flowed more and more freely—so freely, indeed, that many of his best stories will only bear repetition to a select audience of one. Like all *raconteurs* Jerry has days when he seems to dry up. On these days, experience has taught me that it is better for one to dry up too, as nothing more than " Yes " or " No " can be extracted from him. Unlike most talkative people, he never repeats himself. No matter how skilfully one may lead up to a story which he has already told, one will get nothing from him but " Lave off your tricks. You know that as well as meself an' bether."

Often as we drive together through a country whose inhabitants I know almost as well as Jerry himself, I play the tourist and feign ignorance

of the entire neighbourhood. Jerry is almost always ready to play this game. I ask, Who lives in that house ? Jerry, being perfectly aware that I know every member of the family, will reply—

“ ’Tis a wonder you don’t know that, as often as we’ve passed this way.” Then he will proceed to unfold the history of that family to the fifth generation, ruthlessly digging up the family skeleton if it exists.

He is most conservative and for a long time waged war against motors. He firmly refused to give way to them, and just jogged on stolidly in the middle of the road till the motor was brought to a stand. Things are altered now, but in the early days of motoring the law invariably took the side of the horsed vehicle in case of a collision. One particular *nouveau riche* and his car, acted on him like the proverbial red rag on the bull. One day we were driving on a narrow road with a wide piece of boggy grass on each side ; this motor was coming towards us tooting its horn loudly. Jerry paid no attention ; on it came at full speed right at us. It was only at the last possible moment

that Jerry pulled on one side—so narrow was the margin that one step of his car was torn off. For some minutes he remained speechless with rage. Then he said, “There’s two things that passes all belief. The pride of beggars an’ the stink of badgers.” He never spoke again during a long drive, so I also have a grudge against that motor.

For some years after I made his acquaintance, Jerry was only a driver for a man who owned a number of cars. He had never been in any other employment and must have been a faithful servant, for on the death of his employer he was left a small sum of money and a horse and car, with which he set up business for himself. His late employer, as well as being the owner of hack cars, was an undertaker. Jerry drove the hearse.

On my congratulating him on setting up for himself he replied—

“I’m in dread I’ll miss the funerals. There’s no place a man would see so much life as when he’d be drivin’ the dead. ’Tis often you’d see them wid a dry eye that you know would rather be cryin,’ an’ them cryin’ that were countin’ the



money an' laffin' inwardly to themselves. I remember laffin' hearty won day, an' I drivin' an ould woman to the grave. 'Twasn't at her I was laffin' (the Lord have mercy on her), but at the hungry crew of relations that was cryin' behind her, an' that I knew was prayin' for her death for years before that. I knew well the disappointment that was before 'em. Wasn't I a witness to the will? 'Twas I that brought the Priest to her at the last, an' he sent me for the solicitor. I knew what that meant. 'Out of hell there is no redimption.' 'Tis the very same wid money that the Church will get her claws on."

I can only recall one occasion on which Jerry's ready wit and nimble tongue failed him. He took this so much to heart that I have never since ventured to allude to it. A large party of us were on our way to Cahirmee great horse fair in a waggonette driven by Jerry. There were two or three Englishmen amongst us, who had never before been in Ireland. They intended to buy horses in the fair, and I had told them that they could not do better than ask Jerry for advice. This delighted him and he began forthwith.



“ The first thing you must remember, is that every man wid a horse to sell is a liar, an’ the simpler he looks the bigger liar he is. If you’ll meet a man to-day ridin’ a horse wid a broken knee, he’ll surely tell you ’twas a slip he got an’ he leppin’ six foot of a stone wall, when maybe the same horse couldn’t lep a sod of turf in a gap an’ ’twas under the car on the level road he bruk it.”

At this time we were passing numbers of horses on their way to the fair. It was not long till we passed a countryman riding a good-looking horse with one badly marked knee. Jerry pulled up.

“ Ask him, your Honour,” said he.

“ That’s a good-looking horse. It’s a pity he broke his knee,” said the Englishman. “ How did he do it ? ”

“ Not to tell your Honour a lie,” said the countryman, “ to fall down in the middle of the level road for no rason in the woruld.”

Shouts of laughter from the Englishmen. Jerry hung his head and never spoke another word that day.

I think Jerry is seen and heard at his best on the occasions when his car is engaged for the entire day and he is taken on some sporting tour, such as a day with the fox-hounds, or a more or less poaching expedition after snipe. His flow of anecdote is much accelerated by the presence of the bottle, which he knows is concealed in the lunch basket in the well of the car. It is needless to say that he is not a teetotaller. What Jarvey is? As he once said to me when I offered him half a glass of whisky—

“ ’Tis them half-glasses that makes all the drunkards. A man forgets all about won of ’em in five minutes an’ takes another. I defy any man to say that he ever saw me liftin’ me hand wid won of ’em, an’ if your Honour has any more in the bottle, I won’t commence now. I jined the Lague of the Cross once, but I bruk out two days afterwards in a fit of timper. I was drivin’ a commercial man that I often druv before. He was never widout the bottle an’ always trated me very dacent. This day as usual we hadn’t gone very far when he passed it across the car to me. ‘No, thank you, sir,’

sez I, 'I'm timperate now.' He said no more but pulled a big cigar out of his breast pocket an' handed it to me. As your Honour knows, I never smoked.

" 'No, thank you, sir,' sez I agin. He looked at me very mad.

" 'Do you ate grass?' sez he.

" 'I do not,' sez I, as mad as himself.

" 'Then Begob,' sez he, 'you're not fit company for ayther man or baste.'

" 'Gimme that bottle,' sez I, an' that's what bruk th' only pledge I ever took. I had like to capsize the car that same night, an' the commercial man lost won of his sample cases."

Looking back over the many years and many dreary miles over which Jerry has driven me, on that most uncomfortable of all vehicles, an Irish side-car, I can recall but few dull moments. The wettest day fails to damp his spirits. The darkest night but adds to the sparkle of his wit. Wherever these tales and conversations may be found lacking in point of humour the fault is mine. They are written entirely from a memory which is not as good as it was some twenty years ago.



## CHAPTER II

### GENTILITY

“ I’M forty years on the road drivin’ the dead an’ the livin’—funerals, weddin’s, commercial min and the like of your own Honour and it’s many the change I’ve seen, and damn few for the better. The worst is the way that ould dacency is gone out of the country and Gentility (God bless the mark) come in place of it.”

“ The poor corpse itself don’t get the same respect it used to, for where I used to get the makin’s of an elegant white shirt, out of the mourning scarf that’d be over won shoulder and under the other—to say nothin’ at all of what’d be about me hat—now two or three pence ’ud pay for the rag of butther cloth that is genteel enough for the job. And maybe it’s a glass of wine an’ a sweet cake they’d give you, in place of lavin’ you fill for yourself out of a



bottle of Jimison that'd put you in the way that you wouldn't know what you were cryin' for. No! dacency is dead, and Gentility givin' it but a hungry wake.

“ 'Tis th' education that gerruls is gettin' is the cause of it all. What do they bring out of the Convent wid 'em but style and grandeur and frocks of Frinch an' English, so that their poor mothers don't know what they do be talkin' about half the time. They may know the Frinch for butther, but they can't make it, and the poor divils they'll marry will be glad to get a shirt washed for 'em once a month.

“ Look at that one walkin' by this minute! Look at the clothes of her!—fur, feathers, and silk! Oh! Maryanne, Maryanne, I knew your mother—a fine, dacint, respectable woman, in an elegant blue cloak an' a shawl on her head. A bether-lookin' woman than ever you'll be—dress yourself or undress yourself!

“ An' when all is said an' done, what have you on but a kind of a top-dressing of grandeur. B'lieve me, or b'lieve me not, your Honour, you'd meet a disappointment in that one's shift,

and moreover, you'd find her to be wearing what her mother, the dacint woman, never wore—calico trousers! How do I know, is it? A dam'd good right I have to know them same trousers. Didn't I go near losin' me life over 'em?

“To meet 'em on the side of the road and they hangin' on a bush, wid the wind blowin' the two legs of 'em asunder! Only for the black houl't I had of the mare the same time, the two knees were swep' out of her. But God is good after all, and the divil isn't too bad nayther, for if Maryanne happened to be inside them trousers the same time, the divil nor meself, no, nor a combination of the two of us together, couldn't keep the mare on her pins. Herself and meself 'ud be kilt. The fright of them trousers is in her heart from that day to this, and she never passes the bush without laving a snort out of her.

“The same Gentility is the quare thing. Like the rest of the fashions, it takes the women like a disase. Them that had it worst some time ago, haven't it at all now, but a worse

complaint than it. Makin' min of themselves! God knows they were fierce lookin' enough, playin' hurley wid bandages around their legs, like soldiers or horses, and givin' every second welt to one another an' the ball, but a man could partly guess they were faymales by the way they'd spread their legs to stop it, although their petticoats were above where the Highlanders keep 'em. I suppose I'll see 'em kickin' a football before I'll die; I'm told they're doin' it in some places. But all that is nothin' to the horse-ridin'—boots, breeches, spurs, an' I suppose a tail to the shirt.

“I saw one of 'em yesterday, and I first thought she'd cut herself shavin' but 'twas only a beauty spot. However, I've no doubt that whiskers will grow on 'em later on. Maybe 'tis all for the binifit of the poor horses tho', for 'tis often you'd see their hearts batin' through the hole that'd be bored in their backs after a day's huntin' wid a side-saddle. I know fifteen or sixteen stone of a lady livin' not far from here. I won't tell her name, for 'tis often she sits on the side of the car, where your Honour is now,



and you might put her off of it. Well, won day, she axed me could I ricommind her a horse. I toul't her of won belongin' to—(I won't tell his name ayther)—but sez I to her you'd bether get a day's hunt out of him first, for he might prove too fiery for you. So she did. Some time afther, I met the man, an' sez I, 'Did she buy the horse?' 'She did not,' sez he. 'Did she give him a sore back?' sez I. 'She med a bog of it!' sez he, and I believe 'twas true for him.

“There's two kinds of 'em huntin', the man-woman and the won that haven't her mind med up which of the two she'll be, for you'll see the bones of her stays through the man's coat, and if I was put on oath I couldn't swear that she wasn't wearin' a bustle—anyway, there's only some of her in the saddle! An' they'll be trated like min, too, for there's no man'll be losin' a hunt, ketching a horse for one that's as well dressed for runnin' as himself, an' as well able to throw her leg over him when he's cot.

“Howsomever, even if Gentility took longer to kill a man than boots and spurs or even a hurley itself, it 'ud be a dam'd sight worse death

he'd die, so I'll take the won in breeches. Maybe she wouldn't be huntin' every year.

“ G'wan out o' that ! G'wan ! 'Tisn't Gentility you have behind you to-night, but dacincy, and a dacint sup of nourishmint we'll get where we're goin' and not tay nor the like of it.

“ 'Tis true for your Honour, forty years is a long time to be stuck on the side of a car widout ever doin' another hand's turn, only the two days I put down as a Tay boy at the great house above an' them were the two hardest days I ever put over me, since or before. 'Twas in th' ould lady's time (she's dead this long time an' the divil has her surely) an' only for the mercy of God an' Billy the Darkie, that was a sweep in the town below at that time, 'tis butlerin' I'd be this day.

“ Though you mightn't think it, be lookin' at me in the state I'm in now, whin maybe I don't have time to rub a razor to me jaw onct in the week ; in thim days I was the clanest an' the best-lookin' boy in the parish, an' th' ould lady ever an' always had a great taste for me, an' was never done tryin' to coax me down off the car



to put the livery on me. But 'twas all no good for her. I knew how pinurious she was in her ways an' the blister of a tongue she had. No boy ever stood her the second month. Her wages was thrifling an' the livery grasy, for wasn't it handed down from gineration to gineration of the poor Tay boys, no mather what shape they'd be. The won 'twas med for must have had a great brain, for the hat that was goin' wid it was always blindin' them that kem afther him in the job.

“ 'Tis a true sayin' that ' misfortunes never come single,' for 'twas on the very same day that meself an' ould Quilty (him that owned the car) fell out, that she walked up to me, an' ' Jeremi,' sez she, ' I hear that Quilty have you sacked, so 'tis as good for you lave me make a servant of you.'

“ ‘ Well,’ sez I to meself in me own mind, ‘ here’s at you, me ould Nagro,’ but, ’twas what I said to herself was, ‘ The Lord spare you your health, mam, I’ll be above at the great house before you.’ An’ so I was.

“ Now, all the time while I was walkin’ up

to the great house, I was thinkin' what could have happened to the last fella. I knew it must have come sudden on him whatever it was, for it wasn't more than an hour since I seen him sated on the box of the carriage alongside of Dan Flyn the coachman.

"I knew he was a poor crature that could stand great abuse, for he was a son to Canty the fish joulter an' suffered great hardship ever since he was born. 'Tis in an ould herrin' box he'd be put to sleep, an' 'tis on porther an' spratts he was rared. I wasn't many minutes above till Dan toul't me all about it.

" 'Th' ould divil is gettin' worse an' worse,' sez he, 'an' only for the way that she's in dread of the black mare an' that I have persuaded her that no other person could drive her, I couldn't keep the job. She giv poor Canty the divil's own tortury all the week, till the crature was mostly out of his sivin' sinses wid her, so while ago whin the wind whipped the hat off of him an' slapped it into herself inside in the carriage, knowin' well what 'ud be comin' to him, he lepped off the box an' away wid him, an' never drew

bridle till he was inside in the Barracks an' 'listed in the Miletia. I druv her for an hour afther that, an' all that time she was talkin' to the hat an' shakin' her fist at it, the same as if she had poor Canty inside in it. Makin' up her mind what she'd say an' do to him whin she got a houl't of him. She knew nothin' about the Miletia till afther. The first thing she did when she was toult where he wint, was to go hot foot to the Barracks in pursuit of the livery. Now it seems that accordin' to the law whatever clothes a man do be wearin' the day he 'lists in the Miletia, must be hung up on a peg wid his name an' number on 'em an' kep' there till the uniform is sthripped off of him the day he is disbanded an' no person can interfare wid 'em. Whin she got down to the Barracks, who should be before her guardin' the clothes, but Billy the Darkie that was a corporal whin he wasn't a sweep. She knew him well, for 'tis often he swep' the chimneys for her.

“ ‘Gimme me elegant livery wid the silver buttons on it,’ sez she, ‘that that thief Canty is afther stalin’ from me.’



“ ‘I will not,’ sez Billy.

“ ‘Then you’ll never rub another brush to a flue in my house,’ sez she.

“ ‘You didn’t pay me for the last won,’ sez he.

“ ‘You didn’t half clane it,’ sez she, ‘an’ moreover, you stole the sut.’ (She was very particular about havin’ the sut for killin’ slugs in the garden.)

“ ‘To the divil I pitch yourself an’ your sut,’ sez he. ‘I’m a corporal to-day.’

“ ‘I’ll report you to your captain,’ sez she, an’ wid that she walked over to th’ officers’ mess an’ toul’t her story.

“ ‘An’ now,’ sez she, ‘I demand me livery, an’ don’t forget that there was two dozen solid silver buttons on the coat whin you got it, not to mintion what was on the waistcoat.’

“ ‘If there were diamonds on it,’ sez the captain, sez he, ‘you couldn’t get it. Nor I wouldn’t allow the Queen herself to turn won of my soldiers naked into the barrack-yard the minute he was discharged.’

“ ‘I’ll sacrifice the throwers to him,’ sez



she, 'so your modesty needn't make a thief of you.'

" 'The regiment will be disbanded on the first of the month,' sez the captain. 'Be waitin' for him outside the gate an' sthrip him yourself, an' I don't care a damn whether you give him your throwers or not.' Wid that he walked off an' toul't the sinthry to admit her no more.

" You may say it wasn't aisy to plaze her whin she got back that evenin' to the great house. 'Tis all I had to be thankful for was that the livery was where she had no control over it. Such drillin' an' marchin' as I got from her! She had me torminted showin' me how to do things that I could do bether than herself.

" I could nayther talk nor walk to suit her, an' she med me wash me hands, for she said she got the shmell of the horses from me, an' once whin I forgot meself an' comminced to blow through me teeth whin I was helpin' her into her cloak, 'I'm not a horse,' sez she, 'you ignorant clown.' I knew very well what she was, but I was in dread to tell her.

" The second day was worse than the first,

for she cot me smokin' just afther me breakfast, an' she broke the pipe on me.

“Only for the few draws I got from Dan durin' the day I'd surely do some harm to meself or some other one. That an' breakin' the most of what was in the panthrey was all the comfort I had. Howsoever, I stood it out till about three o'clock whin the carriage kem round for her.

“‘I was never yet seen out widout a foot-man,’ sez she, ‘so bad an' dirty as you are you must do. Put on the livery hat,’ sez she, ‘an' rowl a rug round your legs, the most of you will be cōvered that way. We'll go some lonesome road. Keep the hat off of your ears as well as you can, so I can be instructin' you in your juties an' behaviour. An' the first thing I have to say to you is, don't dar to answer me back or look around at me.’

“That finished it. I tuk a runnin' lep into the hat that med a pancake of it, an' before she had her sinses gethered back to her I was below in Quilty's yard an' 'tis there I am ever since.”

## CHAPTER III

### BRIDGETOWN SOCIETY

“ You must get some other person to drive you to-morrow, your Honour, for ’tis the first Saturday in the month an’ ’tis a coachman I do be on that day in place of a jarvey. Wet or dry, ’tis the covered car I must have, an’ a collar an’ a scarf on me like I’d be goin’ to a funeral. Quilty has a contract taken these many years past for drivin’ all th’ ould maids in the town visitin’ won another. No one in the yard but me can plaze ’em. I suppose I must have a private appearance about me. An’ ’tis ‘Coachman’ they’ll all call me while I’m going the round wid ’em, but ’tis ‘Jerry’ I’ll be next mornin’ agin. I must drive ’em won by won, singly, be themselves, alone, an’ whin the first will have the round done, maybe, ’tis her next-door neighbour I’ll take on the same coorse. ’Tis the custom



wid 'em to say, ' Not at home ' to ache other, for 'tis well they know that, wid all the drivin' I have before me, I couldn't be wastin' time standin' outside the door while they'd be talkin' to won another. I do be tired climbin' up an' down off the sate an' handin' in cards to the servant gerruls. Won of 'em toul me that part of her juty was to sort 'em out on the Sunday mornin' and give 'em back agin to their right owners afther Mass. Ould Miss Jane O'Brien is the first I picks up an she's the most genteel an' troublesome of the lot. She keeps a pair of gloves that she bought for me five or six years ago. The servant brings 'em out an' the first thing Miss Jane does is to look at 'em an' say, ' Are they a good fit, Jerry ? They ought to be, for they cost three an' nine-pence three-farthins in the Munster Arcade.'

“ The minute the round of calls is over I must give 'em up to her agin no mather how cowl'd the day is. I never got such abuse as the day she forgot to strip 'em off me. I wore 'em all the day an' gev the rest of the ladies a share in the granjur of 'em. She was waitin'



for me in Quilty's yard when I kem in an' she was nearly too mad to spake.

“ ‘Tell me,’ sez she, ‘which of them owld cats bribed you to wear me gloves while you were drivin’ her.’

“ All I could say or do wouldn't persuade her that it wasn't poor Miss Nagle becos she had a fallin' out wid her a short time before that. The very next tay party she met her at she put tuppence into a saucer an' handed it round the table sayin', ‘I'm headin' a subscription to buy Miss Nagle a pair of gloves for her coachman.’

“ I'm toul't there was the divil's shindy afther that. You may be sure she's keepin' a sharp eye on the gloves ever since.

“ It comes a dale chaper for 'em all to have the car on the same day. There's about tin of 'em, an' four shillins is what Quilty charges as the job is so regular. The cratures are so full up of granjur an' gentility that they never lets on to won another that 'twas on the same day all the visitin' was done. Once or twice a year five or six of 'em will jine together an' make up the price of Quilty's ould waggonette an' two

horses (you couldn't rightly call 'em a pair, altho' they're pullin' corpses together these tin years) an' we'll go visitin' all the Quality widin a drive of us.

"They wouldn't like it at all if the Quality had the same regulations as themselves about visitin', an' you never see such a mournful look as one of 'em will give whin a butler throws a 'Not at home' at her on the doorstep.

"Their minds do be med up for tay drinkin' before they starts out' an' I raly do think that if they were left into six or seven houses afther won another, the tay-pot would be sampled in every won of 'em. I always notice that on the drive out 'tis about their servant gerruls they do be takin', an' to listen to 'em you'd shurely think that all the bad characthers in Ireland was in service in Bridgetown. All the same they do be everlastingly swoppin' gerruls wid ache other for fear there'd be any sacrets in the town unknown to 'em, I suppose.

"Bad luck to it for Tay, 'tis it I have blemt for half the misfortunes in the counthry. There's ould women in the town wid stomachs that would

make good boots, they're so well tanned from it, an' look at the state of the club below on account of it.

“ God be wid ould times; 'tis many the fine dacent drunkin' gintleman I see comin' down them steps. An' what would you see there now? Tay-pots. Tay-pots an' more tay-pots agin, wid maybe two or three relicts of ould times sated wid a jug of wather an' an empty glass before 'em waitin' for some person to come in an' put the whisky in it for 'em. An' I'm toul't 'tis the same way at balls an' parties. Tay an' coffee an' gruel, God help us, in place of punch for the gintlemen an' Nagus for the gerruls like it used to be.

“ I see a ball party afther a weddin', won time, in a house not too far from this, where no sober man would be allowed disgrace the house by goin' out of it. From all accounts the door-keeper wasn't kep very busy turnin' 'em back. What I see comin' away from there wasn't too well able to travel. 'Twas a navy captain was married the same day an' there was a dale of sailors there. 'Tis likely they got a surfeit



of wather where they kem from for they weren't usin' much of it on shore. 'Twas the wettest night that ever kem before or since, an' I was out in it all night comin' an' going wid ladies till near mornin'. Whin I was takin' the last load home, the street was like a river an' I was going as hard as I could to get the job over me whin, all of a sudden, the mare stopped dead an' had like to throw me out on top of her back. Of coorse I hit her a skelp of the whip but 'tis back she ran instead of going on. I had the lamps lit an' they were shinin' very bright on the wather, so whin I looked down I could see very plain what was frightenin' her. 'Twas no wonder she didn't mind the whip, for right in the middle of the road there was a sight she never saw the like of before. A very fat little man in a navy uniform, lying on his stomach, in about two inches of wather, kickin' out like he'd be swimmin'.

“ ‘ Get up out of that,’ sez I to him.

“ He had his head turned lookin' over his shoulder an' his two eyes were leppin' out of his head.



“ ‘ I could swim this way for ever,’ sez he, ‘ but I am in dread of my life of sharks.’ ”

“ People toul't me afther that he was captain of a ship from Inja. I pulled on won side from him an' wint on home wid me ladies. Whin I was comin' back I looked for him, but there wasn't trace nor tidin's of him. Maybe 'twas the way the sharks had him ate.

“ There mightn't be as much style an' granjur long ago as there is now, but there was a sight more comfort. I often see as much mate an' whisky goin' into houses in this town in won week as would do the same houses for six months now. There was hardly a night but what I'd be out wid some one to a dinner, an' 't isn't out in the cowld I'd be left ayther, like I do be now, but sated at the kitchen fire I'd be an' gettin' me own share of whatever'd be goin'.

“ I was always very great wid cooks, but I was greater wid Maggie Kinealy, that was ould Tom Considine's housekeeper, than wid any won of 'em. She was entirely the best-looking woman in Bridgetown, so much so that 'twas wid a gun ould Tom had to be mindin' the boys away from

her. Every Friday as sure as Friday would come he'd give a dinner-party, an' 'twas always the same four I'd have in the car for it. The doctor, the Petty Sessions clerk, the D.I., an' the bank manager. All ould lads like himself that would as soon be dinin' on a Friday as on a Saturday, for 't isn't mate was troublin' 'em but drink. 'Twas always the same thing for dinner—salt herrins. I don't know if your Honour ever heard it, but there's nothin' in this world would give a man such an appetite for punch. I remember won night. I tuk the four of 'em out as usual an' was sittin' at the kitchen fire, along wid three or four more boys like meself, while Maag was dishin' up the dinner to 'em. Afther a while she kem out from the dinin' room an' sez she—

“ ‘ They'll be late to-night an' we'll have plenty time to make ourselves comfortable an' have a sup of punch as well as themselves for I put an extra shake of salt on the herrins.’

“ So we did, an' a very laughable an' jovial time we had thrickin' wid won another an' Maag. All through I was very great wid her.

Afther some time up she lepped an' ' Holy Biddy ' sez she, ' I forgot to milk the cow. Come out, Jerry, an' hould the candle for me.' She took the can an' I tuk the candle an' out wid us. Well, as sure as you're there, the teats was hardly wet before the cow give a twist to her tail an' quinched the candle. ' Have you a match, Jerry ? ' sez she. ' I have not,' sez I, an' wid that I began searching her for won. 'Twas a bright night an' the moon was shinin' in the door of the cow-house whin I looked up and see ould Tom aimin' at us wid a big brass blunderbuss wid a mouth on it like a drain-pipe.

" ' Come out,' sez he, ' till I blow the head off you.'

" I squeez meself as tight as I could in agin the cow an' said nothin'.

" ' Only for the wish I have for that cow,' sez he, ' I'd shoot you where you are.'

' Begob, if you shoots me, sir,' sez I, ' I'll carry the cow to glory wid me.'

The word was hardly out of me mouth till Maag stept out from behind the cow as bould as brass.



“ ‘ If you lave that shot go,’ sez she, ‘ I’ll spill the milk, for the noise of a gun always makes me lep.’

“ Shure the divil a tint of milk was in the same can no more than in me pocket the same time.

“ ‘ What’s that ? ’ sez she agin. ‘ Oh, blessed mother, ’tis the dining-room bell. The gintlemen must be out of the materials. ’Tis you’ll be the talk of Bridgetown to-morrow afther the dry dinner you gev ’em.’

“ Ould Tom began to curse an’ swear be this an’ be that, an’ shoulderin’ the blunderbuss, away wid him in to the house to give out more whisky. ’Twas afther that I found out how asy ’twas to milk a cow in the dark.

“ There do be a dale more dacent funerals than weddins. What do I mane by a dacent weddin’ ? Won that will have Quilty’s ould landow an’ the pair of hearse horses to be sure, an’ me drivin’ ’em. You’d hardly know me if you see me on a weddin’ mornin’ an’ I havin’ more ribbons on me than you’d see on a counthry stallion at a fair in the month of May. ’Twas



at th' auction above at the castle afther th' ould lady dyin' that Quilty got the landow. He got more than he ped for too, for there was a hin sittin' on fourteen eggs under the sate. A grand sitter that same hin was for she never riz off of th' eggs an' I drivin' her down to the yard. Only for the weddin' bein' next mornin' she'd surely hatch out every won of 'em.

“ 'Twas young Richard Hutchins that was married the same day. A poor innocent, well maning, misfortunate crature that th' Almighty had some spite agin for he never left him do anything right in all his life. 'Twasn't the won he wanted to marry he got at all, but her sister. A big major of a woman that a bether man than he might lawfully be in dread of. Upon me sowl she'd frighten you if you see her walkin' out from church, a bride, wid a bunch of flowers in won hand an' poor Richard Hutchins in th' other. You could see plainly from the wild way he was lookin' round him that if she took her hand off him for won minute he'd run. She put him into the landow an' got in herself afther him an' closed the door. I tuk 'em back to the

house where the breakfast was an' be damned if she didn't drive him in before her for all the woruld like won that would be shootin' at a hin.

“ The way he kem to marry her was like this. She had a good-lookin' sister—at laste you'd think her a beauty if you seen her alongside Mrs. Hutchins—that he was coortin', but at that time poor Richard used to take a small sup of drink. You couldn't call him a drunkard, but the poor wake kind of a brain he had would be nearly turned by the steam from a glass of punch. She med him take the pledge. Bad as he was before he was a thousand times worse afther that, for any bit of spunk he ever had in him kem out of the bottle. He got so shy an' backward in himself afther a few days on a limonade diet that she got tired of him an' tuk up wid the curate—he left her behind him whin he got a parish an' 'twas just about the price of her). Poor Richard sat himself down an' began to cry in place of batin' that curate like any man that had a respect for himself would do.

“ ‘ You can't marry the two of 'em,' sez th' eldest sister. ‘ What'll you do wid Richard ? ’

“ ‘ I’ll give him to you along wid my blessing,’ sez the young won. That very evenin’ whin Richard went out visitin’ his gerrul as usual, ’twas th’ ould won he found waitin’ for him.

“ No person ever knew just exactly what occurred between ’em but whin the servant gerrul opened the door to lave him out he fell down the steps wid the trimble that was in his legs. The next day was the ladies’ monthly visitin’ day an’ these two was the first on me list. ’Twas a great surprise to me whin in place of laving cards they wint into every house. I couldn’t make it out at all till they wint callin’ at number five an’ number six—next-door houses to one another. The servant from number five kem runnin’ out to me, as I was standin’ waitin’ at number six wid her eyes leppin’ out of her head.

“ ‘ Glory be to God,’ sez she, ‘ ould Jane is goin’ to be married this day week to Hutchins. I had like to be cot at the kayhole. The news paralysed me.’

“ I understood it all then. They were publishin’ the news while ’twas hot. Poor Richard had no chance from the first minute



ould Jane got her grip on him. He surely had a right to kill the curate. They carried on the same way for the whole round of visits an' ould Jane ped the whole bill herself in th' evenin'. There was no bans published, 'twas a special licence she got. Whin the time kem for me to drive 'em to the station to ketch the Killarney train I couldn't understand what the delay was about. 'Ring the bell,' sez I to a boy that was passin, 'an' tell them that they'll miss the train if they don't hurry.' So he did. The servant gerrul kem out.

“ ‘What's keepin' 'em ? ’ sez I.

“ ‘The bridegroom is lost,’ sez she. ‘We have the house searched for him an' can't find a bit of him. Did you see him comin' out the window or the door ? ’

“ ‘I did not,’ sez I. ‘There's a tree in the garden ; see he is afther hangin' himself.’

“ ‘Twas in the gerrul's bed above in the attic he was found wid his head buried under the bolster cryin' like a child. He ate a hole in it wid his teeth an' all the feathers kem out an' stuck to him. If they tuk time to clane him



they'd surely miss the train so you never see such another sight as he was when she put him into the landow. The carriage bein' shut, of course I couldn't see what they were doin' inside, but whatever it was an' whatever gropin' they had under the sate they frightened the hin off of her eggs. She left two or three squalls out of her before she flew through the glass, an' the fright of that along wid all he was afther goin' through finished poor Richard. He dropped down to the bottom of the carriage in a dead wakeness.

“ ‘ Stop ! Stop ! ’ screeched Jane. So I did.

“ ‘ Come down an' help me,’ sez she.

“ Whin I got down I found her houldin' a scint bottle to Richard's nose.

“ ‘ That's the wrong kind of a bottle for his disase, mam,’ sez I. ‘ Lave me run into Murphy's an' get a half-pint of Jimmeson.’

“ ‘ Hurry,’ sez she puttin' her hand into her pocket an' givin' me the price of it. ‘ If people say I kilt him, afther this you can tell 'em 'twas wid kindness I kilt him.’

“ You never see such a change as the whisky put into poor Richard. He tuk the half-pint

in won drink before Jane could take the bottle down from his mouth.

“ ‘Pick the feathers out of me hair,’ sez he to her, ‘an’ don’t be standin’ gapin’ there. ’Tisn’t for that I married ye.’

“The train was late so I had time to give him a kind of a rub down wid me handkicher before he wint into the station house. People were surprised to see the bould way he walked in an’ the bride carryin’ a hand-bag behind him. Whin the train was lavin’ the platform they were standin’ at the windy an’ his arm was round her waist, whoever put it there. I’m toul’t he never touched limonade from that day out an’ that wasn’t all. He proved himself to be a tougher man than anybody ever thought, for ’twasn’t twelve months till I was helpin’ him to bury Jane.”

## CHAPTER IV

### SAMPSON'S BABY

“ ‘ Hould up ! ’ Begob, only for the couple of frost nails I got drove in her while ago she’d have the two knees tore out of herself that time. ’Tis shooting your Honour will be for some time I’m thinkin’, for ’tis lookin’ like the makin’s of a black frost. ‘ Hould up agin, I tell you ! ’ ’Tis nearly as good for us to turn back, for hounds’ll hardly ever come to the meet this day.

“ There should be a dale of snipe round Armagh bog, this weather. If your Honour was to go home an’ get the gun an’ the dog I’d drive you here an’ there thro’ the counthry and believe me we’ll get our own share of whatever is goin’. What’s that you say ? Poachin’ ! Sure ’tis all poachin’ these days. Haven’t every Bank clerk in the country a gun an’ a bicycle. As soon as the clock will strike two on this kind of



a frosty day you'd think there was a rebellion afther breakin' out in the counthry wid all the poppin' guns you'll hear. There's a share of snipe an' cock in the counthry all through in spite of 'em, but there isn't seed nor breed of a partridge. I remember well when you'd rise a covey in every farm round here an' maybe two, but once the Bank clerks took to shootin' they didn't last long. Then in the bad times, 'twas very handy for a poor farmer to be on good terms wid the Bank. If the manager was fond of shootin', whenever a poor man would want a little accommodation 'tis all he'd need say is 'Come out afther the Bank closes an' I'll have the covey marked down for you.'

"I spint a quare day partridge shootin' all around this very place. I was carrying the bag for ould Sampson Blake that lived over there near the mountain where you see the trees. I was only a gorsoon at the time, but I remember what happened as well as if it was yesterday. I had no load in the bag, for the divil a feather he took out of a bird the same day' altho' 'twas given up to him to be the best shot in the



counthry an' partridges was as thick as crows the same time.

“ There was three more sportsmen wid him, young English officers from the barrack, an' he was very anxious to show 'em sport. 'Twas muzzle loaders they had in them days an' a man would be five or maybe tin minutes poundin' powder an' paper an' shot into his gun before he'd be ready to lave her off, an' then 'tis likely he'd have to search what pockets he had before he'd find a cap.

“ Now Sampson was an ould bachelor livin' there all by himself alone. 'Twas said he had a dale of money, but that turned out to be a lie afther. At won time all the women was tryin' to marry him, but they had him given up as a bad job long before the time I'm tellin' you about.

“ The party started off down the drive wid meself an' another boy walkin' a piece behind 'em. We were about half way to the gate whin a fine, tall, good-looking gerrul, wid a shawl over her head an' a baby in her arms, stepped out from behind a tree an' began walkin' along between meself an' th' other boy.

“ I knew her well, she was the daughter of the bog ranger above on the mountain an’ ’twasn’t long before that since her name was published off the altar won mornin’ at Mass on account of the baby. She never spoke a word or took a bit of notice of us but walked on behind the gintlemen who were so busy laughin’ an’ talkin’ to won another that they never knew she was there till we kem to the place where the shootin’ was to begin.

“ Ould Sampson was a very red-faced man, but when he turned round an’ saw the gerrul an’ the child he turned the colour of your shirt. He walked over to talk to her, but she just give him a look that would put a hin from sittin’ and turned her back to him. Then she walked away over to the ditch an’ sat down an’ began to nurse the child.

“ I suppose he thought he was done wid her for that day for he wint back to the gintlemen an’ left the dogs go an’ ’twasn’t long till they came to a point at a covey of birds.

“ Sampson cocked his gun an’ walked up to the dogs ready to fire the moment the birds

rose, but just as he was raisin' the gun to his shoulder the gerrul lept up on the fence an' houlding the baby high above her head shrieked out, 'Look at yer dada.'

"He lift the two barrels go together an' won of the dogs ran home screechin' an' yowlin'. I suppose he got a few grains.

"She kem down agin off the ditch an' sat down to nurse the child as if there was no one in the field but herself.

"Of course not won of the three officers kilt a bird either, wid the surprise they got from the baby. Afther a dale of talkin' an' laughin' amongst themselves an' cursin' and blasphemin' from Sampson, who was all the time walkin' about the field kickin' turnips before him wid the dint of rage, they called the remainin' dog an' med off agin afther the partridge.

"The very same thing happened agin. Just whin he was goin' to fire up she lepped on the fence an' 'Look at yer dada,' sez she to the baby. The divil a feather was knocked out of a bird that time ayther.

"Well, the next thing was that Sampson



wint over an' held out the full of his fist of money to her, but she hit his hand a box that sint every pinny of it flyin' into a bush of furze where it never was got from that day to this.

“ Whatever he said to the three officers I don't know, but anyhow away wid the whole of 'em an' me afther 'em, straight through the counthry, leppin' ditches as they met 'em an' never stopped till they were above on the top of that mountain over there. Whin they got up there they left the dog go agin an' he soon kem to a point but no one ever knew what he found, for before Sampson got near him, up she lepped out of a gully that was on the side of the mountain an' ‘ Look at yer dada,’ sez she agin.

“ Well, you wouldn't believe me if I toul't your Honour, all the miles we travelled that day. For the gintlemen med up a plan between themselves that they'd walk her off her legs. Th' other gorsoon gev it up airly in the day for he had no boots, but I held to 'em till dark. Ould Sampson wasn't much more than able to crawl when we got out on the road near the school house yonder, and the three gintlemen was bet out entirely.

“Here she comes agin houldin’ the baby above her head and she kep’ dancin’ and singin’ before ’em every step of the way back to the lodge gate, an’ then sez she, ‘Look at yer dada. Any one that ’d see him now ’d never believe it.’

“Here we are at the meet, your Honour, an’ the divil a Christian here, but your own boy an’ horse an’ every hair on the crature turned the wrong way from the cowld. You surely must have great mind for huntin’ to come out the like of this of a day. If you might be said by me an’ go back whin I toul’t you we might kill a bag of snipe but ’twill take us half a day to go back now. ’Tis mostly all downhill an’ the frost nails is wore out. Well, well, we can’t help it. If she falls itself it won’t be the first time wid her. Her knees must be tough, as the divil said to St. Anthony whin he see him at his prayers. What happened to ould Sampson’s gerrul is it? Begob, I couldn’t tell you, but there had like to be war over her that same night. I was too fitagued to go home so ’twas by the kitchen fire I stayed. That’s how I kem to know all about it. Sampson was givin’ a dinner-

party to the three Englishmen an' two or three more neighbours. Won of 'em was a young cousin of his own. A wild young divil that they were tryin' to make a doctor of at won time but had to give it up afther spindin' a dale of money on him. He wint in drunk to his examination an' bate an ould doctor that axed him a question he couldn't answer.

“ Well, the party wint on very sociable till the conversation turned on the gerrul an' the baby. They were laughin' and jokin' about the fine day's sport they had an' won word borrowed another till all of a sudden up lepped the young doctor an' said, he wouldn't sit there any longer an' hear his cousin insulted. Wid that he flung a glass of wine into the face of the youngest officer an' challenged him to fight a jool the next mornin'.

“ Now, the last thing in the world that ould Sampson wanted was to have any talk, or row about the business. He knew how to manage the doctor, but he was in doubt what to do about the Englishman that was insulted. Anyhow, he thought he'd settle the doctor first, so he passed



the wink round to the rest of the party an' they began praisin' his bravery.

“ ‘ Here's good health to you,' sez won, fillin' up his glass. The doctor was not so very backward in returnin' the compliment.

“ ‘ Here's good health to you,' sez the next man, an' so on all round the table. It took three full rounds of the table before the doctor was stretched.

“ ‘ Ring the bell,' sez Sampson.

“ When the maid kem in, ‘ Call in a couple of men,' sez he.

“ The coachman an' meself kem in.

“ ‘ Carry that gintleman out,' sez he.

“ ‘ What'll we do wid him,' sez the coachman.

“ ‘ Carry him up an' throw him in one of the beds,' sez he.

“ So we did. No sooner was the doctor carried out than the whole party turned at the Englishman. Won round of the table finished him.

“ ‘ Ring the bell,' sez Sampson.

“ When meself an' the coachman kem in agin—

“ ‘ Carry this gintleman out,' sez he.

“ ‘Where’ll we put him,’ sez the coachman.

“ ‘Throw him in the bed wid the other,’ sez he.

“ Well, after that they spint a very jovial night drinkin’ and card playin’ till mornin’. The jool was to be fought at six o’clock. A few minutes before the time the whole party walked upstairs, as well as they could, an’ into the room where the two haroes were stretched.

“ There they were side by side an’ the doctor had his arm round the Englishman’s neck.

“ ‘What conduct is this?’ roared Sampson. ‘A jool due to be fought in five minutes’ time an’ here I find the two principals in bed together, packed as close as two spoons in a plate basket. Me house is disgraced,’ said he, ‘lave it this minute an’ never let me see ayther of ye agin.’

“ The doctor was the first of the two to recover his sinses although he was the drunkest when we put ’em to bed. He tuk his arm from under the Englishman’s head an’ sat up.

“ ‘Who put the man in my bed?’ sez he.

“ ‘’Tisn’t your bed,’ sez Sampson. ‘By rights ’tis the cook’s.’

“ ‘Where’s the cook?’ sez the doctor, rowlin’ the Englishman on won side an commincin’ to search the bed.

“ ‘Is it between the two of ye you’d expect to find her,’ sez Sampson. ‘That kind of a cook wouldn’t be kep tin minutes in my house.’

“ ‘I’ll have satisfaction out of somebody for this,’ sez the doctor leppin’ out of the bed. ‘I suppose ’twould be brought in as murder if I shot my bedfellow—a quiet, peaceable bedfellow he was, for I never knew he was there—but wid the help of God I’ll put a bullet in his suparior officer.’

“ ‘You’ll do no such thing,’ sez the Major. ‘I have no quarrel wid you.’

“ ‘That’s aisy rectified,’ sez the doctor. Wid that he hit him a belt of the bolster that levelled him an’ whin he got up he commined callin’ him every kind of a coward he could think of. Sampson worked very hard to make pace between ’em, but ’twas no good for him. Nothin’ but blood an’ plinty of it would contint the doctor.



“ They were pourin’ cowl’d wather over the little man in the bed for a quarther of an hour before they had him in a fit state to act as a second in the jool an’ even thin his hand was shakin’ so that he couldn’t undertake the loadin’ of the pistols.

“ ‘Lave all that to me,’ sez Sampson. ‘ ’Tisn’t the first nor the forty-first jool I conducted.’

“ Whin all was ready, Sampson took the Major on won side an’ sez—

“ ‘If you don’t kill that young divil he’ll nearly kill you. I know him well. He’ll hould shootin’ at you from this till night if there’s life in him, an’ I wouldn’t put it past him to be waitin’ for you wid a shot gun some dark night if you escape him this time.’

“ ‘I’m a good shot,’ sez the Major, ‘ an’ I’ll do me best.’

“ So he did.

“ I helped Sampson load the pistols. He could hardly manage it alone for the blade of the carvin’ knife had to be red-hot before he could cut nice bullets out of a farthin’ dip candle.

“ ‘I don’t believe in people wastin’ a whole

day tryin' to kill won another at long range,' sez he. 'Five paces is long enough.'

"The little Englishman wouldn't consent to this at all, an' the doctor bruk out callin' 'em worse names than ever. At last they agreed on tin paces an' stood up in front of won another.

"The Major proved himself a great shot. 'Twas on the bridge of the nose he hit the doctor. I got a great fright, for I med sure that Sampson had med a mistake an' left a rale bullet in the pistol. He fell the same as if you hit him wid a sledge-hammer an' the blood spouted out of his nose.

" 'I'm kilt,' sez he.

" 'You are,' sez Sampson, houldin' a whisky bottle to his mouth. 'Take won good drink before you go.'

"You may say he did that. I never since saw a man wid the same swallow. He kep bubbles risin' in the bottle for nearly five minutes. When the bottle was taken away from his mouth he was spachless. We put him back in the cook's bed an' whin he kem to himself late that evenin' 'twas aisy to persuade him that 'twas a drame

he had an' that there never was a jool at all. A pair of black eyes was no novelty to the same lad so he passed no remark about them.

“ 'Twas a good many years afther that before Sampson wint broke. Whin his creditors comminced to squeeze him, of coorse he began to squeeze tinants. 'Twasn't long till he had to evict won of 'em an' then the trouble began. They all jined together an' started a 'plan of campaign,' an' Sampson couldn't stir widout two police mindin' him. They fired at him several times an' never hit him, but he wounded himself won day in a very simple manner. Since the bad times kem he always carried a gun no matter what he might be doin', so this day whin the parish priest called on him to try an' make a settlement between himself an' the tinants he was armed as usual. Before he tuk to carryin' the gun he always had a walkin' stick an' he had a habit of strikin' the toe of his boot wid it whin he'd be arguin' wid you. Himself an' the priest were givin' it to won another hot an' strong over the eviction, an' Sampson got so excited that he forgot 'twasn't the stick he had. The very first



stroke he hit his foot wid the muzzle, off wint the shot an' blew the toe off him. The fright he got was a dale worse to him than the wound. He was months in bed afther it an' the next time I see him there was only the shadow of him there. He was in a bath-chair wid his foot stuck up on a cushion in front of him.

“ ‘I’m glad to see you out agin, sir,’ sez I. ‘You must have gone through a dale.’ I was sorry I spoke at all to him for he bursted out cryin’.

“ ‘Oh, Jerry,’ sez he, ‘I suffered a dale. The two first months was the worst. I was expectin’ every minute that I’d get lockjaw. A person that never tried it would hardly believe the hardship there is in keepin’ your mouth open for two months at won stretch, an’ what sleep you’d get wid your jaw kep asunder by the handle of a tay-spoon wouldn’t do you a haporth of good. Of coorse it should have been a great comfort to me all the time to think that the wound was so far away from the jaw, but I never thought of that till I was out here in the chair lookin’ at where me foot is.’

“Poor Sampson was never the same man afther. He never got his nerve back, an’ ’tis no wonder he wouldn’t wid two peelers walkin’ behind him wid loaded guns every place he’d go. I always said ’twas them that kilt him in the finish. He was nearly the first landlord that was Boycotted, but ’twasn’t long till the most of his neighbours were in the same way. Times was bad for every one an’ rints was too high. No person ever got justice in this counthry till they’d be afther committin’ murder or worse, so ’tis little wonder they do be shootin’ people. Bad as things were, they’d be a dale worse only for an R.M. that was here then. His name was Clifford Lloyd. He put the fear of God into Captain Moonlight, an’ was the manes of convictin’ a good many of ’em. They were in dread of their lives of him. I remember goin’ to mass won mornin’ an’ seein’ this piece of poetry nailed up on the chapel door—

‘May the heavens above  
Sind down its dove  
Wid claws like rasors  
To tear the hide  
Off Clifford Lyde  
An’ throw it into blazers.’

“ ’Twas thought that Hinnessy the school-master wrote it, an’ they tried very hard to prove it on him. ’Twas like his writin’, but nobody ever hard of him writin’ poetry before, an’ ’twas surely no amatoor that wrote the like of that.”



## CHAPTER V

### FATHER MAC'S GRIDIRON

“ ’Tis true for your Honour, that’s a fine house, but ’tishn’t every man would have a family to fill it. Three stories an’ eight windies on every story. Whin ould Hinery Cole was livin’ there he med a boast that he’d never stop till he had a child lookin’ out of every won of the twenty-four windies, an’ only for what happened to him he’d surely keep his word.

“ He was what you might call a persevarin’ marryin’ man. He had four wives. The first won had eight childer an’ that filled the windies on the ground floor. The second had six an’ the third had five. She was a very delicate little gerrul the time he married her an’ ’twas agin her will she ever took up wid him. She was the daughter of a minister an’ won of a heavy family. They were very poor an’ ’twas her

father that med the match. The mother was always agin it, for, sez she—

“ ‘Poor Fanny will never have the strength to contind with the two families of step childer that’s in the house before her.’

“ The first family was gone nearly wild. They were more like Injuns than Christians. The second wife ped no attention to ’em, an’ ould Hinery never gev ’em any schoolin’. Well, the minister’s wife was so oneasy in her mind about her poor daughter, that she didn’t sleep a wink the night afther the weddin’ an’ airly the next mornin’ she walked down to the great house to enquire from the servant how the new mistress was gettin’ on. Just as she rang the bell a windy on the next floor was thrown up and the bride put out her head.

“ ‘How are you gettin’ on, me poor child?’ sez the mother.

“ ‘Oh, mama, this is a frightful house,’ sez she. ‘I don’t know which of the two families is the worst. When the first family was done wid me I felt for all the world like a lady’s lap-dog that would be put to wetnurse bull-dogs. But I think

I suffered more from the second brood. I was just sittin' down to take a rest an' recover meself afther separatin' the two eldest gerruls, who were tryin' to kill won another, fightin' over the weddin'-ring that they took away from me (they said 'twas their mother's before 'twas mine) when in ran a nurse in a great hurry, an' threw about four stone weight of a baby into me lap and left him there for hours. Do you remember the time you put a bantam hin hatchin' a goose egg? 'Twould remind you of it if you saw me.'

“ Well, that poor little cratur had five babies before you'd think she'd had time to have two, then a faver broke out among the big childer. Ould Hinery ran away to the salt wather at the first alarum, but the poor little wife stood her ground an' nursed 'em all out of it. When the last of the childer was well she took the faver herself an' died. Ould Hinery's farm steward wrote to tell him the bad news an' this is the lether he got in answer to it—

“ ‘ This is dangerous weather fór hay; don't make the cocks too big. Remember that Tuesday



is Ahercross fair. Take about forty of the sheep there. Wednesday might be a suitable day for the funeral. I'm goin' to Cork that day meself.'

"'Twasn't twelve months at all till he was married agin, to a big strong lump of a gerrul that he saw dippin' herself when he was at the salt wather. He was so anxious for this won that he was at the church waitin' for her an hour before the time.

"All the Cole family do be buried in a vault under that church. Th' interance to this is outside, under a flagged path that runs by the side of the buildin'. The sexton of the church at that time was a deaf an' dumb man. Like all them kind of cratures he had a terrible temper an' used to get very mad wid people that couldn't understand his signs an' motions. 'Twas a bither cowl'd day, an' ould Hinery was walkin' up an' down on the flagged path stampin' his feet to keep himself warm. Presently here comes the dummy, wavin' his arms about an' talking on his fingers. Hinery didn't understand him, an' ped no attintion. The more he wasn't understood, the madder the dummy got. They

were nearly batin' won another whin a neighbouring man that understood the signs kem up.

“ ‘ What's the matter wid him ? ’ sez Hinery.

“ ‘ He's sayin' that 'twould be fitter for you to come off them flags an' not to be leppin' and kickin' that way, on the top of the last wife that was a damn sight too good for you, while you're waitin' for the next won.' ”

“ The fourth wife only filled won windy before she was the manes of killin' ould Hinery. He had to get up in the middle of the night to go for the mid-wife. 'Twas in a high gig he druv to fetch her. Whin they were comin' back in the dark the horse shied an' capsized 'em. She was a big, fleshy woman that weighed upwards of sixteen stone, so 'twas no wonder ould Hinery was dead whin they found him in the mornin', in the bottom of a dyke wid her on top of him an' her leg broke. 'Twas always said by them that knew him best, that only for the weight of that woman he'd surely kep his word an' fill every windy in that house wid childer.

“ I dunno what became of all the childer.

There was a great scatter put on 'em, whin the land was sould by the Court an' divided up amongst the tinants. There was talk won time that the house was to be sould to a French community of nuns, but whin they hard that ould Hinery Cole's ghost used to be seen in it, the bargain fell through. I suppose they were in dread that the ghost might be as fond of women as himself. You may say there'd be lively nights in any nunnery he had a free pass into.

“ 'Tis Dr. Stokes that lives in the steward's house now an' a great doctor he is. Hardly any one would know him by the name of Stokes. The name he goes by is 'Dr. Soakage.' ('Tis a good name for him, for 'tis unknown what whisky the same man has soaked into himself these last twinty years.) All the same no person ever saw the sign of drink on him when he was attindin' to a case. Ned Burke, the man that do be drivin' him, knows just what to do for him in a case of emergency. He always has a quart of sour buttermilk on hand and no matter how drunk the doctor do be whin a sick call comes, he'll pour every drop of it down him. In a



quarter of an hour afther, he'll be fit to face any disase.

“There's a great friendship between himself and Father Mac, the parish priest, an' indeed what the two of 'em don't know was niver wrote in any book. 'Twas Father Mac cured Hinnessy the schoolmaster when he had Dr. Soakage bate an' what pills was in the dispinsary swallowed. He lost the use of his legs and was for more than twelve months sittin' in a big armchair widout movin'.

“‘I'm beginnin' to think,' sez the doctor, ‘that there's nothin' the matter wid that man but imagination. He has the constitution of a tinker's ass,’ sez he, ‘for I have more experiments tried on him than would kill tin ordinary min, an' there he is still atin' three males a day regular an' batin' his wife whenever she comes widin' reach of his stick.’

“‘Would you lave me try me hand at him?’ sez Father Mac.

“‘I would, or your foot,’ sez the doctor.

“‘If you give the case over to me,’ sez the priest, ‘you must lave it to me entirely an' have

no more to do wid it, even if the patient walks up to you for advice.'

"Hinnessy's house was next door to Father Mac's, so he took up the case that minute.

" 'How are you to-day, James?' sez he, shakin' him be the hand, an' at the same time standin' down on won of the paralyzed feet wid the heel of his boot.

" 'Oh, jabers, me foot,' roared Hinnessy.

" 'If I thought you had any feelin' in that,' sez Father Mac, 'I'd be more careful.'

" 'I'm dead from the knees down,' sez Hinnessy, 'but I gets the divil's blast of pain where I wouldn't mintion. 'Tis out of respect to your Riverance I called it me foot.'

" 'I can cure you,' sez the priest, 'but you must send five pounds to the Pope whin the cure is complate. 'Tisn't for everybody I'd do it,' sez he, 'but I can't bear to see you sufferin' this way. Maybe you didn't know that I have the gridiron that was used on the blessed Saint Lawrence. 'Tis a very holy relic an' often med great cures. If you was to sit down on it while I was sayin' a few prayers suitable to your case,

you'd surely rise up a sound man. People will be comin' to see you from far and near afther the cure, an' maybe the Pope himself may send for you.'

"Hinnessy was very thankful to his Riverance, and his wife an' daughter were proud to think of the great honour that was bein' done to him.

" 'I'll go for the blessed relic this minute,' sez Father Mac, 'but you must have him ready for it when I come back, for I can't keep it long out of the chapel. You must strip off his trousers,' sez he, 'for his naked flesh must be down on it, the same as the saint's was.'

"The women had him all ready by the time the priest kem back. He was longer away than he said he'd be, for there was but a bad fire in his kitchen, an' it took time to get the gridiron rightly red. It was very red when he started out wid it, but it had a black appearance when he reached Hinnessy. All the same 'twas hot.

" 'The cowld of th' iron will be a shock to you,' sez Father Mac, 'but keep thinkin' of all the poor saint suffered an' don't stir for



your life. 'Rise him up,' sez he ; ' sit him back down now,' sez he. So they did.

"The roar that Hinnessy let go was heard miles away. He falled the wife and lept on top of the daughter. Up an' away wid him down the road screechin' an' bawlin', widout a tack on him but the pattern of the gridiron, an' never stopped till he was above at Dr. Soakage's.

" 'For the honour of God rub somethin' coolin' on me,' sez he, turnin' up the picture of the relic to him.

" 'I will,' sez the doctor, steppin' back an' givin' him a runnin' kick that threw him out on his face an' hands on the road. He never lost the use of his limbs from that day to this, but I don't think he ever sent the five pounds to the Pope.

"Dr. Soakage tuk a holiday not long ago an' left a young doctor in charge of his district while he was away. A very nice young man, but shy an' bashful in his ways. 'Twas the very first job he got afther lavin' college. He could handle men well enough, but the women would

go miles to the next dispinsery sooner than be doctored by him, he was so shy an' awkward wid 'em. I see a very nice young lady to frighten the life out of him, an' indeed he frightened her, too, to commence wid. She got a fall off of a horse an'unjinted her shoulder. It seems that the same shoulder med a habit of comin' unjinted whenever she'd fall, so she was used to it an' knew how it should be put back in its place. There was a gintleman wid her that often see shoulders put back in the huntin' field, but of course he wouldn't undertake it while the doctor was there. The young doctor examined her, an' saw what was wrong, but he was so shy of her that 'tis to the gintleman he talked all the time. He was dressed in ridin' clothes, breeches an' gaiters. The first thing he did was to sit down on the ground an' take off one boot an' gaiter. There was nothin' under the gaiter but a very hairy leg, an' the sock he had on wasn't a bit too clane. The young lady was lookin' at him all the time as if she thought he was mad or drunk. Next he put his hand in his pocket an' pulled out a hankicher that was a dale dirtier than the

sock. He looked at that a while, an' put it back where he got it.

“ ‘ Will you lend me the loant of your hankicher ? ’ sez he to the gintleman. Whin he got it he tuk the lace out of his boot an' tied his foot up into a parcel wid the hankicher round it.

“ ‘ Tell the young lady to lie down here wid me,’ sez he.

“ ‘ How dar you make such a proposal to me,’ sez she, very mad. ‘ If you were a man,’ sez she to the gintleman, ‘ you'd kick him.’

“ Up lept the doctor wid his face the colour of a turkey cock, an' began to hop away as fast as he could on won leg. The gintleman ran afther him an' brought him back, but it tuk all of half an hour to persuade the lady to stretch herself out on the ground wid him. As soon as she did he put his foot under her oexter an' gev th' arm a pull, an' the job was done. She gev him great credit for the way he did it.

“ ‘ That shoulder,’ sez she, ‘ has been out a dozen times, since I put it out climbin' a mountain in Switzerland, an' I never got it put in so aisy as you did it.’



“ He looked at her as if she had two heads,  
an’—

“ ‘ This woruld isn’t commodious enough at  
all for some persons,’ sez he.

“ That was the first an’ last word he spoke to  
her.”

## CHAPTER VI

### CAPTAIN DINNEHY'S TROUSERS

“CAN I drive your Honour to the cricket match? Certainly, to be sure I can, an’ further. A poor harmless child’s play of a game that same cricket is. I’d rather see won hurlin’ match or a good lively game of football than all of it that was ever pled. Two min playin’ an’ all the rest of ’em on their stoop watchin’ ’em an’ only gettin’ a chance to lep at the ball once or twice in a whole day. God be wid ould times whin you’d see hundreds of people at a hurling match all ready to back their own side. Maybe them that would win might have to fight for their lives afther. I remember seein’ three of the Sullivans kilt be the Regans. The Sullivans were great min an’ won the match aisy, but there was a funeral the same day that kep half their faction away from ’em. You’d never see the

like of that of a grand day's sport now. All the life an' element is gone out of the counthry. Th' only time I ever see any fun at a cricket match was the time Dr. Soakage brought over the Mitchelsfort eleven to play Bridgetown. Brady the chemist was the captain of the Bridgetowns. Th' only good bowler he had was young Scully the butcher, an' he never knew the minute he'd get drunk on him. Up till nine o'clock on the mornin' of the match you'd nearly say he was too sober to play his best. At tin he was wheelin' down the middle of the street, wid a marrow bone in his hand, roarin' for a Mitchelsfort man to fight him. Brady ran out an' pulled him into the shop an' comminced pourin' coolin' medicine down him. 'Twas all no good. He ran out agin in spite of him roarin' an' bawlin' that he was pisoned. Dan Shahan, the publican, gev him near a bottle of whisky to relieve him. That stretched him. Poor Brady was surely to be pitied, to have the like happen to him at the very last minute. 'Twouldn't be half so bad only that 'twas himself sent the challenge to the Mitchelsfort min.



“ He was just in th’ act of drawin’ a tooth out of Dan Shahan’s mother an’ gettin’ great satisfaction out of her screeches when who should walk into the shop but Captain Dinnehy an’ a strange man wid him. Now the captain, at won time, was the greatest cricketer in the Queen’s army, but he wint mad an’ had to be put into th’ asylum. Some said ’twas whisky an’ others said ’twas love that caused it. I’m thinkin’ meself that he brewed a kind of a punch out of the two an’ that’s what med him such a bad case. Sometimes he’d be nearly well an’ then he’d be left out wid a keeper mindin’ him. That was the stranger that kem into Brady’s shop wid him.

“ ‘ You’re the very gintleman I’m glad to see to-day,’ sez Brady. ‘ I’m in the divil’s own hoult. That misfortunate blaguard Scully’s gone drunk on me. Will you take his place ? ’

“ ‘ If this man here will give me lave,’ sez the captain, ‘ I will, an’ welcome.’

“ ‘ For th’ honour of God lave him play, sir,’ sez Brady.

“ ‘ I will not,’ sez the keeper. ‘ ’Twould be

fitter for you to mind your health,' sez he, turnin' on the poor captain. ' 'Tis unknown what you might do when your blood got hated an' you wid a bat in your hand.'

" ' I'll give you tin shillins if you'll lave him bowl,' sez Brady. ' I'll stand responsible for all damage. He can't do much harm wid a ball an' to do his worst.'

" ' You don't know that man,' sez the keeper. ' Didn't he go near killing two keepers, an' he in the padded cell widout a tack on him.'

" ' I'll make it a pound so,' sez Brady, ' an' I'll get two of the police to help you mind him.'

" The bargain was med that way.

" The next thing was to get a pair of flannel trousers to fit him. He was a terrible fine man. There wasn't much more than half an hour for Kate Clancy the dressmaker to put Scully's trousers an' another pair together, but she did it. They weren't altogether too good a fit, but you couldn't rightly call 'em ondacent.

" Now, Father Mac an' Dr. Soakage between 'em was givin' a grand lunch to the cricketers. 'Twas given in Father Mac's garden in a kind of

summer-house that he called the 'Pagoda.' This was a round buildin' sunk a few feet lower than the level of the ground. You had to go down two or three steps into it. 'Twas a very tight fit for the cricketers an' the rest of the guests but they squeez into it. I druv Dr. Soakage over that day an' 'twas settled that meself an' Father Mac's coachman should do the waitin'.

" 'Twas hardly we were able to crush our way round the table between the guests an' the back of the Pagoda.

" 'Twas nearly the longest day in the summer, so they said they'd ate their lunch at eleven o'clock an' play on afther as long as the light lasted. That's another thing I have agin cricket. I never yet saw a match finished.

" There wasn't a puff of air the same day so whin the whole party an' two hot legs of mutton an' a ham an' cabbage was squeez into the Pagoda, wid the sun blazin' down on the tin roof, 'twould stifle a stoker. Afther the first five minutes they were all callin' for drink. I was makin' the best of my way round wid the whisky an' Father Mac's man was comin' behind me wid



the wather. Dr. Soakage was sated at the head of the table so 'twas there I comminced me round. I knew what he could do in the line of drink, so I more than half filled his tumbler with whisky. He was busy talkin' to Brady at the time an' never noticed Father Mac's man till he had the tumbler filled to the top wid wather. He was very mad.

“ ‘What are you doin’?’ sez he. ‘Do you think I’m growin’ bulrushes in my stomach? Take that down to the priest. ’Tis more like holy wather than anything else.’

“ ‘’Twas in the middle of the lunch that the captain bruk out. All of a sudden he lept up on the table an’ tuk off his trousers.

“ ‘ ‘’Tis bloody hot,’ sez he, ‘an that divil of a woman left threads in ’em that’s ticklin’ me.’ Wid that he rolled ’em up into a ball an’ flung ’em at the ham.

“ By the mercy of God I was near the door at the time. Out wid me an’ I never stopped till I was above on the roof of the Pagoda. ’Tis there I had the grand view of what happened afther.

## CAPTAIN DINNEHY'S TROUSERS 75

“ The next two that kem out was Father Mac an’ a leg of mutton. It hit him on the poll an’ riz him up the steps. Afther that they kem out in a heap all mixed up wid plates an’ tumblers an’ the rest of the captain’s clothin’.

“ I was gettin’ very oneasy about the poor doctor, for he didn’t come out wid the crowd. There was no sign of the captain ayther. The rest of the party was now inside the priest’s house wid the door locked an’ some of ’em screechin’ for the police out of the windies.

“ I didn’t know what I’d best do till I saw a vintilator in the roof. I looked down this an’ ’tis then I saw the quare sight. There was Dr. Soakage sated above in his place lookin’ as happy as a king. The captain was sittin’ alongside of him mother naked wid a carvin’ knife in his hand. Every whisky bottle in the Pagoda was collected together in front of ’em. They were fillin’ every second tumbler wid won another an’ drinkin’ ’em down as fast as you’d count won, two, three.

“ The minute I saw that I wasn’t a bit oneasy about the doctor any more. I knew well he’d

put any lunatic in the world under the table in tin minutes at that rate. 'Twasn't long till I see the carvin' knife fall out of the captain's hand. Soon afther that he reached out for the ham an' took it be the shank an' med a stroke at the doctor wid it. He missed him an' fell over backwards off the bench an' sted there snorin' an' chokin'.

“ ‘Is there anybody there to help me out,’ sez the doctor.

“ ‘There is,’ sez I, slidin' down the roof an' comin' in to him.

“ ‘I was never so drunk before,’ sez he, ‘an’ I don't suppose there's a sup of buttermilk in the place.’

“ 'Twas true for him. I took him out into the garden an' gev him the biggest head of cabbage I could find for a bolster. He got up as fresh as a daisy about seven o'clock that evenin'. There's no doubt he was a sound man.

“ The keeper had but little trouble puttin' the straight waistcoat on the poor captain. Brady charged him a pound for usin' the



stomach pump on him, so he got his own back again.

“ There was no cricket pled.

“ The first thing Scully did when he got sober enough to walk was to go down to Brady's shop lookin' for his trousers.

“ ‘ What do I know about your trousers ? ’ said Brady.

“ ‘ Didn't you strip 'em off me afther makin' me insensible wid the dose of pison you gev me ? ’ sez Scully. ‘ Dan Shahan's mother toult me all about it. She sez the captain gev you a pound for 'em. If you don't get 'em back for me I'll make 'em the dear trousers to you.’

“ ‘ 'Tis a damn lie for her,’ sez Brady. ‘ I'm sorry I didn't break her jaw whin I had the chance.’

“ They held arguin' this way for a length of time till at last Brady had to tell him the truth.

“ ‘ If you can get 'em back now,’ sez he, ‘ you'll have the makin's of two pair in 'em afther what stuff Kate Clancy put into 'em to make 'em fit the captain, but I don't think you'll ever see 'em agin for 'tis in th' asylum they

are. They couldn't take the poor man back wid nothin' on him but the straight waistcoat, every other stitch of clothes he had was tore to flithers at the lunch table.'

" 'I'll have me trousers,' sez Scully, 'if I have to go into Bedlam itself for 'em an what's more, you must come an' help me get 'em.'

" 'Twas in the Cork lunatic asylum the poor captain was an' 'twas there me two lads wint the next mornin' in pursuit of the trousers.

" 'Can we see Captain Dinnehy?' sez Brady, to the first keeper they met afther bein' admitted.

" 'You can not,' sez he, 'nor you wouldn't like to if you could. I don't know how he is to-day, but he was roarin' for a cricket bat all day yesterday an' sayin' what an elegant ball the doctor's bald head would make.'

" 'What kind of trousers is he wearin'?' sez Scully.

" 'They aren't like trousers at all,' sez the keeper. 'Only for where the buttons are you'd say he was wearin' the sate in front.'

" 'So he is,' sez Brady. 'That's your sate, Scully, mine is behind where it should be, but

I'll make you a present of it. You could hardly ever wear your own agin wid the button-holes Kate had to put in it. 'Twas they took all the time to make.'

" 'If we saw the doctor,' sez Scully, ' maybe he might get the trousers for us.'

" 'He might,' sez the keeper, ' I'll tell him your business.'

" Whin they saw the doctor he promised to do what he could for 'em an' thin he tuk 'em to a place where they could see the poor captain through iron bars.

" He was barefoot an' had his socks rowled up into a ball. He had his boots set up at th' other end of the cell for a wicket an' every time he'd miss 'em he'd start cursin' an' blasphemmin' something frightful.

" ' 'Tis a very interesting case,' sez the doctor, ' I dunno what's keepin' him so excited.'

" ' I beg your pardon,' sez Scully. ' Maybe 'tis my trousers. Wid the sate of 'em stickin' out in front of him that way 'tis likely they'd be reminin' him of cricket.'



“ ‘ That’s the very thing that’s doing the harm,’ sez the doctor.

“ It tuk nearly what keepers was in th’ asylum to strip the trousers off of him, an’ they were but very little good to Scully whin he got ’em, for they had to tear ’em off in th’ end. He tried his best to make the doctor pay for ’em, but he was very glad to get out of the place whin he hard the answer he got.

“ ‘ Any man that would wear the like of them should be under my care,’ sez he.

“ Whin they got home that night they found a challenge from the Mitchelsfort club waitin’ for ’em.

“ Brady was no way anxious to take it up, for he knew he could put no dipindence on Scully, an’ the team was useless widout him, but when Dr. Soakage heard about it he said they must play or they’d never be able to hould their heads up before a Mitchelsfort man agin.

“ ‘ If I could keep that blaguard Scully away from the drink,’ sez Brady, ‘ I wouldn’t be a bit in dread of ’em.’

“ ‘ Don’t let that trouble you,’ sez the doctor,

‘I’ll make a good boy of him. Where is he now?’ sez he.

“ ‘He’s hard at it agin over in Shahan’s public house. There’s some excuse for him this time,’ sez Brady, ‘for he’s greatly put about by the loss of the trousers.’

“ ‘Trousers or no trousers I promise you you’ll see him playing at Mitchelsfort on Saturday,’ sez the doctor. ‘Bring him here to me. Get a half-pint of whisky an’ he’ll follow that across the street.’ So he did.

“ I dunno what the doctor put in the whisky, but whatever it was ’twas very savare medicine, for ’twasn’t tin minutes afther Scully finishin’ the half-pint till he was down on the floor of Brady’s shop makin’ S hooks of himself.

“ The pain he was in sobered him an’ set him screeching for the doctor.

“ ‘You’re very bad,’ sez Dr. Soakage, ‘an’ I think you’ll die, but I’ll do me best for you. Dan Shahan’s mother have you pisoned. ’Tis the bottle I gev her for the toothache you’re afther drinkin’ an’ there’s but very little hope for you. Carry him down to my house,’ sez he,

‘ an’ put him to bed where I can keep a constant eye on him.’

“ So they did.

“ When he got up on Saturday mornin’ he was feelin’ bether than ever he felt in his life an’ he kept fallin’ wickets all day as fast as the Mitchelsfort min could put ’em up for him. They never got such a batin.

“ Dr. Soakage was the soberest man I had in the wagonette on the drive home. He was sittin’ on the box wid me an’ ’twas only by great persuasion I kep him from ridin’ postillion.”



## CHAPTER VII

### THE SALT WATHER

“Hi! Hi! Hoy! I’m Jerry, sir. Begob, I thought your Honour was goin’ to take another car. ’Twould be no wonder if you didn’t know me. Why so? ’Twas only last night I kem back from the salt wather. ’Twas the first time I ever saw the say, an’ wid the blessin’ of God I’ll never see it agin. The rason I thought you mightn’t know me, is that I’m turnin’ meself inside out all the week an’ I didn’t rightly know what side might be out to-day. ’Twas Dr. Soakage an’ Father Mac that tuk me down to Youghal wid ’em. I was damn sick lately wid the janders, an’ whin I was drivin’ the doctor won day—‘What ails you, Jerry?’ sez he. ‘I don’t like the colour of you.’

“‘I don’t like it meself,’ sez I.

“‘Stick out your tongue,’ sez he. So I did.

‘I don’t like the colour of that but as little,’ sez he. ‘Put it in agin.’ So I did.

“ ‘You’d get great binifit from the say,’ sez he.

“ ‘Twould be as good for you tell me I’d get binifit from Agypt,’ sez I. ‘How is the like of me goin’ to get there?’

“ ‘Father Mac an’ meself is goin’ to Youghal to-morrow an’ we’ll take you,’ sez he. ‘You’d make a nate body servant for us.’

“ ‘I’d go,’ sez I, ‘but Quilty would never give me lave.’

“ ‘He’ll be in dread to refuse Father Mac,’ sez he. ‘Won word from him would put all the funerals away from him.’

“ ‘Twas true for him. Father Mac got me lave widout a bit of trouble. Dr. Soakage has an ould maid of a sister that keeps a boardin’-house in Youghal. ’Twas there we stopped.

“ ‘Now, Jerry,’ sez the doctor, ‘you’ll get no binifit from the say onless you go through the whole coorse of it. Drink it,’ sez he, ‘an’ dip in it,’ sez he, ‘an’ go boatin’ on it.’ So I did. I wint dippin’ first, an’ thin I swallied about a

quart of it—in a different part of the say from where they were all washin' themselves—God help us, afther that I went boatin'. 'Twas in what they call the 'sick boat' I wint out. This is a divil of a boat about the length of the car, that they fills full of people an' takes out to where the waves are rowlin'. They laves down th' anchor an' keeps her there, till you'd think that what was born in your stomach was gone to the bottom of the say. 'Twouldn't take such an effect on you if you had the boat to yourself, but the divil such another crew you ever saw as I had wid me. There was won man in the horrors of drink, that put two min to their best before they got him into the boat. He med grog of the say before we kem back. Then there was about twinty stone of an ould woman that I'll always be thankful to. We'd never land so soon, only that the sailors were in dread she'd kick the bottom out of the boat whin the hard struggles of the sickness kem on her. 'Twas sixpence ahead we ped for it, an' there's no doubt but we got value for the money.

“ 'Tis in the hotel Dr. Soakage an' Father



Mac sted the most of the time. The divil a much salt wather they drank.

“ Ould Miss Stokes—that’s the doctor’s sister—had no licence, so you could get nothin’ but tay an’ minerals there. I’m thinkin’ she tuk her share of what the doctor brought in wid him. I don’t think tay would make any person go to bed in their clothes, no matter how many spoons you’d put in the pot. That’s the way the cook an’ meself put her to sleep, afther carryin’ her upstairs the second night I was there. I’ll promise you ’tis the last time I’ll ever put a lady to bed. Instead of bein’ thankful to us, she tried to put the doctor agin me, an’ she sacked the poor cook. They tuk me fishin’ too. ’Twould be as good for you lave a line down out of the car an’ go fishin’ on the road. There was no fish in that part of the say. Whin they had all the wather in the woruld exposed to ’em, why should they come where the bathers had soup med of it? There was an excursion train kem down from Cork won day wid a timperance society. There was two priests mindin’ ’em an’ they had a brass band to play

music for 'em while they'd be dippin' themselves. Father Mac an' the docthor knew the two priests an' took 'em into the hotel to give 'em their dinner, while the party was in the wather. 'Twas a cowl'd wet day, so the cratures were petrified whin they kem out. The band masther had no control over 'em. There was two or three that wasn't long afther jinin' the society, an' indeed from the looks of 'em they didn't jine it widout rason. I heard afther that the band wasn't timperate at all, but was only hired for the day. 'Twas the drummer that tuk the first drink, an' he brought a bottle out to his comrades. That's what scattered the picnic. They were all standin' around, their teeth rattlin' in their heads from the cowl'd, an' their hands in their pockets, waitin' for the clergy to come out an' give 'em their dinner. The minute the drummer showed the bottle, won of the recruits tuk his hands out of his pockets an' med a straight shoot for the public house. 'Twasn't long till another followed him. Afther that 'twas like a footrace wid 'em. 'Twas the quare nise won of 'em was makin', tryin' to bate a chune out

of the drum wid two fifes, that brought the priests out of the hotel. The police had the bandmasther in the lock-up at this time. Father Mac was greatly vexed about it, but Dr. Soakage gev the drummer the price of another bottle. The train wint back to Cork widout 'em, an' I dunno whether the priests ever got 'em all collected together since.

“ 'Twas true for the man that said the cure was often worse than the disase. I'd a dale rather be sittin' on a car wid the janders on me, than be sittin' in a boat curin' it. All the same, simple things will sometimes cure bad complaints. I knew a man that didn't take a natural sleep for twelve months. He wint through the hands of what docthors was in Dublin, an' 'tis worse they med him wid their dozin' drops. He was nearly out of his mind from takin' 'em. 'Twas Dr. Soakage cured him. He was a big, soft kind of a young man that never did a stroke of work in his life, nor needn't, for he had plinty of money. He thought he was too delicate to walk, an' 'twas by the fire you'd find him sittin' all day.



“ ‘ ’Tis what you want,’ sez the docthor, ‘ is fresh air an’ exercise.’

“ ‘ I can’t walk,’ sez he.

“ ‘ I suppose you can swally fresh air,’ sez the docthor. ‘ Get Jerry’s car,’ sez he, ‘ an’ we’ll go for a drive.’

“ So he did.

“ ‘ Go to such a place,’ sez the docthor, mintionin’ a mountainy road where you’d meet nothin’ but a goat for miles together. Whin we got five or six miles out the docthor—accidentally like—knocked off the young man’s hat.

“ ‘ I’m very sorry,’ sez he, ‘ but as you’re so much younger than me I must ax you to pick it up yourself.’ So he did. The minute he got off the car, ‘ Drive on, Jerry,’ sez the docthor. So I did. ’Twas eight o’clock when the young man got home. He wanted no dozin’ drops that night. I gev him the same drive every day for six months an’ you’d hardly believe the fine, hardy man I med of him.

“ For fear we hadn’t docthors enough in the counthry, all the young ladies is tryin’ to make surgeons of themselves. They were

houldin' meetins' all last summer an' had a woman-doctor comin' down from Cork once a week to tache 'em. They were wild to show off their knowledge, but of course no sick person would allow won of 'em to come near him. At last they got won patient that couldn't help himself, an' 'twas in spite of 'em that he ever got away wid his life. Very little more of their doctorin' an' I'd be gettin' a little bit for meself out of a funeral. 'Twas a poor young man that met an accident won day out wid the hounds. He fell so hard on his stomach that all the wind was knocked out of him, so that he could nayther spake nor stir for some time. He was hardly stretched before four or five faymale medical students was on top of him. They were all carrying surgical cases strapped to their saddles. Won said 'twas his ribs, another said 'twas the collar bone, the third pulled the boots off him an' said 'twas his leg, the fourth said she was goin' to make sure what it was, so she stripped him naked. Then they held an inquest on him. They all stuck to their own opinions, so when he came to, there wasn't a bit of him that wasn't

bandaged an' his ribs was glued together wid plaster. 'Twas a bither cowld day, an' some of 'em wet the bandages, so the poor crature of a man was perished. When they took him to hospital, the divil a thing was wrong wid him but inflammation of the lungs, an' he wint near dyin' of that. I was always of the opinion that 'twas the two drinks of whisky he took before they put him in the motor-car that kep the life in him. 'Twas the masther of the hounds that gev him the first drink. Soon afther that Father Mac kem up an'—'Take a sup of this,' sez he.

“ ‘No, thank you, Father,’ sez the poor young man, ‘I’m afther takin’ won.’ ”

“ ‘That’s the very rason you should take another,’ sez the priest. ‘I never saw a bird flyin’ wid won wing.’ ”

“ I think we were the first lodgers that Miss Stokes ever had. 'Twas only this summer that the docthor set her up in business at the salt wather. Before that she was livin’ wid him. 'Twas over tay they fell out. Maybe that’s the rason she’s takin’ something a bit stronger since. I heard the docthor sayin’ that she had



the life an' sowl torminted in him, wid her tay parties. Once or twice every week she'd have every ould maid in the town gathered around the pot. They'd all be there wet or dry, for they knew well that if one stay'd away she'd have the character tore off her, so that she'd nearly have to emigrate. As a gineral rule the docthor let 'em have the house to themselves, but won day, for some rason or another, he couldn't go out, so he had to jine the party. 'Tisn't one pot nor two they drank, but up to a dozen. At last the biling wather ran out.

“ ‘ Gimme the pot,’ sez the docthor. ‘ I’ll go down to the kitchen an’ fill it.’ So he did.

“ All the cups were empty whin he kem back.

“ ‘ What kept you so long ? ’ sez Miss Stokes.

“ ‘ The tay was too wake,’ sez he. ‘ I had to put a bit of strength in it.’

“ He tuk the shugar an’ the crame off the table before he filled the cups, so that they’d all start fair.

“ ‘ I’m goin’ to give a toast,’ sez he. ‘ So ye must all drink together an’ lave no heel taps. Are ye ready ? ’ sez he.

“ ‘ We are,’ sez they, grabbin’ a houl’t of the cups.

“ ‘ Three spoons to the pot  
When the wather is hot,  
Is the way to make tay,  
Drink it down now. Hooray,’

sez he.

“ As quick as it went down, a dale of it kem up quicker.

“ Although he denied it to his sisther an’ the rest of th’ ould maids, he med a boast of it outside, an’ I believe there’s no doubt in the woruld but what he melted a five drachm horse ball into the tay pot, before he brought it back to the drawin’ room.

“ That was the last of the tay parties an’ ’twas aisy for him to persuade Miss Stokes to go to the salt wather, for she was put under a heavy Boycott in Bridgetown.”

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE LOVE CHARM

“THERE’S no doubt but the divil must be a damn good man,” said Jerry, as we drove by a long line of “Christian Brothers,” walking on the hot and dusty road, dressed in long black coats and tall hats and each carrying an umbrella.

“Only for him those lads wouldn’t have the fine aisy life they have. ’Tis hard to think that they ever gives their minds rightly to banishin’ him, for they must know well that they’d be hard set to make a livin’ widout him.

“From all accounts the divil used to be a dale more sociable wid the people long ago than he is now. I remember meself whin there was plenty of ould men an’ ould women that had the name of bein’ dailin’ wid him, an’ they did a lot more good than harm wid their cures an’ charms.



“ There was won ould woman that lived at ‘ Biddy’s Tree ’ that all the counthry used to be goin’ to. I went once meself to be cured of a toothache, but indeed she didn’t do it for I couldn’t stand the cure.

“ ‘ Go out,’ sez she, ‘ in the mornin’ airly while the dew is on the grass an’ ’hould travellin’ about the fields till you’ll find won of them big yalla frogs wid spots on him. Ketch him be the two hind legs an’ crack his head under the bad tooth and believe me the pain will lave you.’

“ ‘ What’ll I do,’ sez I, ‘ if I laves him slip an’ he leps down me throat.’

“ ‘ ’Tis aquil to you,’ sez she, ‘ for I have another charm that’ll bring him leppin’ up agin.’

“ Indeed, I didn’t chance it, but wint on down to the forge an’ had it drawn by the smith. While I was there a woman brought a child to be cured of the ‘ chin cough.’ Th’ ould woman brought out a donkey mare that was rarin’ a foal. She med the mother stand at won side of it an she stood at th’ other herself. They passed the child three times under the donkey’s belly an’ over its

back an' every time th' ould woman milked a sup of milk an' gave it to the child an' said—

“ ‘Under the milk an' over the cross

The child gets the gain an' the foal meets the loss.’

“ ‘Twas a great cure, for I knew that child for years after an' never hard as much as sneeze out of him.

“ Th' only other time I ever meddled wid charms was near playin' the divil wid me altogether. I only did it out of a joke, but 'twas near bein' the sore joke for me. I hard people sayin' that a certain ould man (he's dead now, and indeed I won't belie him) had a charm that would make any foxey gerrul fall in love wid you. I always had a disgust agin foxey women, but not believin' a word of it I thought I'd try it for fun. I went to him an' he gave me three hairs out of a fox's brush rowled up in butther an' med me swallow 'em fresh an' fastin' in the mornin'. That I mightn't ever sin agin if 'twas two days till there was a woman, wid a head on her fit to light you to bed, followin' me up an' down every place I'd go. As sure as you're there she'd have me married before the week was

out only for what I did. I swapped jobs wid the man that was drivin' the mail car an' remained out every night an' slept every day for twelve months. I found out that she used to walk a mile every evenin' to make me bed while I was out. After that 'twas in the hay I slept an' drew the ladder up afther me. That weaned her.

“ There was charms for cows and horses too. Won ould woman above in the mountain had a cure for the blind staggers in horses. She also used to be burnin' off warts. 'Twas never rightly known whether 'twas the wrong cure she giv him or not, but anyway she kilt a fine horse on Quilty. The way the staggers used to take this horse was like this. You'd be drivin' along at your dead aise whin all of a sudden he'd stop up an' give his head a few shakes. The very next thing you'd know 'tis inside in the well of the car he'd be wid all his four legs turned up to heaven an' maybe the passenger kilt. Quilty was put to great expinse by a commercial man for the damage he did to the samples. They were women's Sunday hats, an' whin he was done throwin' fits an' rowlin' in 'em they was more



like the dirty feathers an' straw you'd see sweep out of a hin house. 'Twas afther that he got the cure for him. It kem to him in a small ball of buther packed in a match-box. I put it down his throat. Be the same token he had like to chew the tum off of me, an' I doin' it. 'Twasn't very long till he began to go mad about the stable. He ate me coat that I forgot afther me in the manger an' thin he turned around an' ate a set of harness all but the hames. 'Th' ould woman said afther that 'twas the brass buckles kilt him, but I always thought 'twas the wart cure she giv him. I dunno would the harness kill him or not. I've seen horses ate very quare things widout hurtin' 'em. The quarest thing I ever knew one to ate was money. This is how it happened.

“ There was a bishop of this diocese won time that was very fond of a nice horse an' very fond of sellin' won too. He couldn't well attind the fairs himself in the position he was in, so 'twas a neighbourin' curate that used to buy for him. He soult a horse won day an' wanted another in a hurry. There was no Fair comin' on, so the curate had to go to a big horse daler in the

town. He saw a horse he liked an' med the dale subject to the bishop's approval. Now, th' arrangement was that the price was to be £100, but £20 of this was to go to the poor curate for his commission.

“The bishop had another curate for a secretary. An innocent crature that knew no more about a horse than a Nun would, but 'twas he that always ped for the horses. 'Twas settled that the horse was to be brought up to the bishop's stable to be looked at, an' if he suited, the curate was to pay for him. All the horse dalin' was done in cash. I suppose he didn't want the Bank to know too much about his business.

“He liked the horse well and ordered the secretary to pay for him. So he did. As soon as the daler got the money he gev the curate a wink an' dropped four notes into the manger. They walked out together and shut the stable door, but the very minute the bishop left, the curate ran back to get his money.

“The divil a sign of it was there. He kem out and whispered to the daler.

“ ‘ ’Tis in the manger,’ sez the daler.

“ ‘ ’Tis not,’ sez the curate.

“ ‘ ’Tis,’ sez the daler agin.

“ ‘ Go back an’ look,’ sez the curate.

“ Back they wint but couldn’t find it altho’ they got a fork an’ threw out all the straw.

“ ‘ Search your pockets,’ sez the daler to the curate.

“ ‘ Search your own,’ sez the curate. ‘ You never put it there.’

“ ‘ Maybe the horse ate it,’ sez the secretary.

“ ‘ Maybe you took it,’ sez the curate turnin’ on him. ‘ Shure the world knows that a horse wouldn’t ate money.’

“ ‘ I’d be sorry to trust one of ’em wid anything,’ sez the secretary.

“ ‘ Don’t be quarrellin’ about it,’ sez the daler, ‘ ’tis aisy to prove it.’

“ Wid that he took some paper out of his pocket an’ tore it into four pieces an’ threw ’em in the manger. They shut the door but remained peepin’ in through the windy. The horse walked up to the paper an’ smelled to it an’ turned back to his hay.



“ ‘ Ha, ha ! ’ sez the curate, ‘ didn’t I know a horse wouldn’t ate notes.’ ”

“ ‘ How do you know but he might ate money an’ not ate newspaper,’ sez the secretary. ‘ They’re very desateful animals.’ ”

“ ‘ I’ll soon prove that to you,’ sez the curate, putting his hand in his pocket an’ bringin’ out a small fist of notes. All he had in the world. In he walked and threw it in the manger an’ kem out slammin’ the door afther him. ”

“ The secretary was at the windy all the time. ”

“ ‘ Run, run,’ roared he. ‘ The horse have ’em swallowed.’ ”

“ In rushed the curate an’ rammed his arm down the horse’s throat as far as his elbow, but ’twas all no good. He was the maddest mad you ever see. I raly believe if he had a knife he’d get his money whatever the bishop might do for a horse. What drove him wild entirely was when the daler busted out laughin’ an’ sez— ”

“ ‘ Begob, I understand it all now. ’Tis a pity I didn’t think of it sooner. Do you smoke ? ’ sez he. ”

“ ‘I do,’ sez the curate, ‘but that’s no rason you should make a grinnin’ eejut of yourself.’

“ ‘That horse ates tobacco,’ sez the daler, ‘an’ ’tis the way he got the smell of it off the notes an’ not off the newspaper.’

“ ‘I suppose ’twould hardly be any use for us to pray to Saint Anthony that recovers all lost things,’ sez the secretary. ‘A thing isn’t rightly lost as long as you know where it is,’ sez he, ‘an’ moreover, it might injure the bishop’s horse.’

“ ‘There’s a common sayin’ in the counthry that a priest’s money isn’t lucky. I never handled any of it, so I can’t rightly say from me own knowledge, but anyhow I know for a fact that that same horse wint broken-winded before a month an’ the bishop had to sell him at a sebare loss. It might be that Saint Anthony had something to do wid it.

“ ‘No, I never was married, altho’ I was very near bein’ cot won time in spite of how careful I was ever since the fright I got from the foxey woman.

“ ‘An ould aunt of mine wint match-makin’

for me. She had the match nearly med whin they fell out over a feather bed. The gerrul's people said they should get it down on the nail, but me aunt said we should wait for it till she was dead. 'Twas a grand bed, too, an' won you'd get a very aisy death in. All goose's feathers. Not as much as won feather of a wild bird in it. Didn't your Honour know that a person could never die aisy in a bed that had wild birds' feathers in it? Some people sez you could hardly ever die in the like at all. I knew won ould woman meself that held kickin' for two days an' nights an' only for fallin' out of bed 'tis likely she'd be dyin' still. 'Twas found out afther, that there was the feathers of a wild goose an' two ducks in the tick.

“ Afther all, I don't suppose there is any truth in it. 'Twould be as well for you to say that a woman that would be lyin' in in a feather bed would hatch a goslin' instead of a baby. Now that I come to think of it meself maybe that's the rason there's so many damn fools in the world.

“ Thanks be to God 'twas in straw I was born.



“ ‘There was a man won time livin’ above there at the foot of the mountain, named Dick Spillane, but ’tis ‘Wildfire Dick’ people used to call him. He was the seventh son of a seventh son. I suppose your Honour often hard that there is a great cure in a drop of blood taken from the like of him out of the middle finger of the left hand at the full of the moon. Wildfire is what they calls that disase that comes like a kind of red itch in people’s faces. ’Twould ruin the best lookin’ gerrul you ever saw in won night. ’Twas out of his blood that Dick med his livin’ entirely. He charged very high for it an’ no wonder he would, for ’tis often he’d have a frightful-lookin’ finger on him at the full of the moon, from proddin’ it wid a needle. Part of the cure was that every person that would come for it should draw the blood themselves so you may be sure he got many a sore an’ deep prod, an’ no two would ever prod in the same hole. There was a widda woman below in the town that had a dale of money at that time. She had no less than two public-houses an’ was sister to the sergeant of police that was there

for years, so 'twas no wonder she had it. She was very anxious to get the second husband, but in spite of all her money she could get no man to attack her, for the face she had on her was like won that would have a bush harrow drawn across it north an' south an' thin aste an' whest. Some persons used to tell her to her face that 'twas the wildfire she was sufferin' from, but behind her back they'd say 'twas the public-houses caused it. I dunno which of the two was right, but anyway she went to Dick for the cure. 'Twas all that was troublin' her was to have her face right before Shrove—that's the time all the matches do be med; so she commined bleedin' him soon afther Christmas. She must have spint a dale of money—blood-money, I suppose, is what it should be called—before Shrove kem, an' the divil a bit of binifit was she gettin' from it. She was a big woman wid a big face, an' I suppose a drop of blood wint nowhere at all on it. Dick would never part wid any more at the won time an' she was gettin' very mad about it, for 'twas the last full moon before Shrove. 'Twas a needle was always

used for fear of the finger festerin', an' all the same 'twas often bad lookin' enough. This day whin the widda's turn kem she whipped a big hairpin out of her head an' druv it into the finger as far as she could before Dick could pull it away from her. The blood spouted out shure enough, but the divil a tint of it she got, for Dick went leppin' an' roarin' about the house. There must be some pison in the hair oil she was usin', for afther a few days poor Dick's finger mortified an' Dr. Soakage had to cut it off.

“ He tuk the law of the widda for compinsation, an' her lawyer said that Dr. Soakage most likely cut the finger off becos 'twas takin' money out of his pockets wid all the patients that was goin' to Dick for the cure. Of coorse, once the middle finger of the left hand was gone there was no more vartue to be got out of the blood. 'Twas mostly a Prodestant jury, so poor Dick got no compinsation an' 'twas in the Union he died afther. Whin she found that Dick's blood did her no good the widda went to the doctor about her face, but he had it in



for her on account of what the lawyer said about him.

“ ‘ Wildfire be damned,’ sez he to her. ‘ Th’ only advice I have to give you, mam, is, if you happen to cut your own finger don’t suck it, for ’twill surely make you drunk.’

“ Shortly afther that she bought a young constable out of the force for herself. He proved himself the best customer she ever had in the public-house. He was a good-lookin’ black-haired man wid a pale face when she married him. I don’t believe that all the blood that was ever squeez out of poor Dick’s finger would whiten his nose to-day.”

## CHAPTER IX

### THE DENTIST

“NOT at all. That isn’t won of th’ ould ancient castles. I saw every bit of it built. ’Twas ould Johnnie Roche put every stone on it wid his own hands, an’ never had a sowl to help him. Along wid that he was a cripple wid a hump of stringth on him like a young camel, an’ a crutch wid an’ iron spike in it, that was bether to him than any tool a mason ever had. While he was buildin’ the little castle, he lived in a hole that he burrowed in the side of the glen like a badger. There’s no doubt he was mad, but he could do many a thing that sinsible people couldn’t do. Whin he had the tower built, he went to work an’ med himself a kay bugle out of a sheet of tin he got some place. Himself an’ that same bugle had like to make a lunatic out of th’ ould lord that kep the foxhounds at that time. Every

time they'd be huntin' in the wood over across the glen there, he'd sate himself above on top of his tower, an' hould buglin' till he'd have the pack goin' distracted through the counthry, an' the lord but very little bether.

“ There was no such thing in them days as travellin' dintists, so when ould Johnnie started makin' false teeth he med a dale of money. 'Tis by them teeth he med his livin' for a long time, an' 'tis by them he lost his life in the lather end. People was comin' to him from miles around. Th' only complaint you could make about them teeth was the colour of 'em. Give him all the woruld, an' he couldn't make you a raly white set, an' some of 'em would be as yalla as a guinea. All the same they were sound and solid for atin' purposes, so there was but little complaints. He was some time makin' them before there was any trouble, but whin the trouble kem it kem hot an' heavy.

“ Some miles away from Johnnie's castle there is a hill called Knock-na-nuss, which is Irish for 'Hill of the bones.' There was a great battle fought there in ould times, an' a terrible



lot of people kilt. I remember meself to see a stack of bones an' skulls piled up in a quarry there, an' to this day the like do be often got in the ploughin'. There was a priest kem to Bridgetown, a very holy man. He saw the bones in the quarry an' thought 'twas a sin to lave 'em there, for fear any of 'em might be belongin' to Catholics. He didn't know what to do for a long time, as of course it wouldn't do to bury 'em in a graveyard, when he wasn't sure what class of people owned them. At last he thought of the ruins of th' ould Abbey, but he didn't know how to get 'em there. No person would touch 'em for fear of the spirits that might be goin' wid 'em. I suppose 'twas some won of the saints that put the plan into his head. He started givin' it as a pinance to all that kem to confession to him, that they should walk to Knock-na-nuss an' bring back won or two bones, accordin' to their sins, an' put 'em in th' Abbey.

“ 'Twill give your Honour an idea of the class of people that was livin' in that town, when I tell you that there wasn't a bone left on Knock-na-nuss in twelve months, an' upwards of three

cart-loads of 'em in th' Abbey. 'Twas about that time that Johnnie first started makin' the teeth. As I toult you before, he was doin' a great trade an' makin' money hand over fist. Now, soon afther the bones was brought to th' Abbey, a report wint round that there was a light seen there at night. There was a dale of talk about ghosts, an' people were goin' miles around sooner than pass that way afther dark. They began to say that the priests should have left the bones where they were, an' there was some talk about takin' 'em back. When the priest hard this he was greatly vexed, an' sez he, 'If there's ghosts there I'll soon send 'em back to where they kem from.' He tuk all the proper materials for doin' so, an' out wid him to th' Abbey won evenin' afther dark. There's a little cell in one corner of it, an' 'tis inside in that he sat down to read his book. I dunno how long he was there, but he had the most part of his prayers said when he hard the crack of a match. That very minute he knew 'twas no ghost he was dalin' wid, so he put the book in his pocket. There was a bright light now shinin'

in th' Abbey, an' he saw everything that was goin' on. He stood his ground widout stirrin' hand or foot for bether than an hour, till the light wint out. Then he wint off home. Next day was Sunday.

“ Afther Mass he began to prache the sermon, an' this is what he said : ‘ If vanity isn't won of the seven deadly sins 'tis next door to it, an' there's people in this church to-day that has it bad. There's women here,’ sez he, ‘ that's wearin' dead people's hair, an' there's min an' women that's wearin' dead min's teeth. They're the very people that's passin' remarks about their priest bringin' Christian bones into a Christian church, an' sayin' that he brought evil spirits wid 'em. 'Tis they'd have the bad taste in their mouths to-day, if they spint an hour in th' Abbey last night as I did, an' saw ould Johnnie Roche pullin' teeth out of the skulls by candle light.’ There wasn't another word of the sermon heard wid the coughin' an' spittin' an' pukin' that bruk out in the congregation. I didn't see or hear what I'm tellin' you, an' am only givin' it you the same way as I got it from them that gev it to meself. It seems that there



was a young man of the Sullivans that got teeth from ould Johnnie. 'Tis the way he got a box into the mouth from a hurley, that druv all his own down his throat. The Sullivans was a strong faction in them days—'tis more than fifty years ago—an' 'twas no joke at all for any person that fell out wid 'em. This young man was at Mass, an' when he hard about the place the teeth kem from, he tuk such a disgust to himself that he wint from won wakeness into another. 'Twas whisky that brought him to, an' I dar say 'twas whisky that med the Sullivan faction arm themselves an' go lookin' for satisfaction from Johnnie Roche. Anyhow, a crowd of 'em collected together, an' med off for the castle. Ould Johnnie was nearly cracked before, but this day med a lunatic of him entirely. When the Sullivans got to the Castle, they were so vexed that they'd surely kill him if they could get in, but the door was closed agin 'em. Ould Johnnie was sated above on his tower, playin' the bugle, an' the chune he was playin' was 'The divil among the tailors.' 'Come down,' sez the Sullivans, 'an' we'll put you in a way

that you'll draw no more teeth out of corpses.' Johnnie was mad, but he wasn't mad enough to do that. He kep on buglin', an' 'twas always the same chune he was playin'. The Sullivans held firing stones at him till they were tired, but the tower was too high for 'em. Then they med a fire an' tried to burn the door. The smoke brought the police. By this time the fire, an' the stones, an' won thing an' another, had the last bit of brain bothered in poor ould Johnnie. He wouldn't lave the police in no more than the Sullivans. All the time there he sat blastin' away at 'The divil among the tailors.' Towards night everybody wint away and left him, but the neighbours hard the chune going on till mornin'. It was the same thing next day. The door was closed an' 'The divil among the tailors' going on above, only waker. He held blowin' for two days an' nights, an' then died wid the bugle to his mouth. 'Twas that way the police found him when they bruk in the door.

"There was won of the Sullivans that med a great name for himself—he was a brother to the boy that lost his teeth. He went by the

name of 'The Whisperer' on account of a charm he had for savage horses. The worst horse you ever saw would be like a lamb wid him afther he whispered into his ear. 'Twas said that he got it from an uncle who was for a long time soldierin' in Inja, where he got it from a black. 'Twas never known what the charm was, for he took it wid him when he died. Didn't your Honour ever hear what happened between himself and your father? 'Tis a wonder you never heard that, but maybe you weren't born at all at the time. I dunno did I ever see as big a man since, as your father was. There was very few horses able to carry him at all, for 'tis right up to the hounds he always must be. 'Twas mostly all stallions he rode, an' 'tis little he cared how savage they might be to commence wid. He had a way of his own for quietin' 'em. 'Twasn't a whip he used on 'em, but an ash plant wid a knob on it. Two or three strokes between th' ears was able to pacify the worst of 'em. Wherever there was a rogue of a stallion that no person could handle, he was sure to be brought to your father an' if he was big enough he'd buy



him. Won day an elegant fine bay stallion was brought to him. There was won man ridin' him an' two more ladin' him. The man on his back had won arm in a sling. The price was small for a grand horse like him, so—although he knew he was a rogue—he bought him. Afther payin' for the horse, of course they should take a drink. 'Twas thin your father noticed that the blood was wet on the cloth coverin' the man's hand. 'What happened to your hand?' sez he.

“ ‘The horse is yours now,’ sez the man, ‘an’ I think you too honourable a gintleman to give him back to me, so I’ll tell you.’

“ ‘I’ll keep him whatever you tell me,’ sez your father.

“ Wid that the man put his hand in his pocket an’ pulled out a finger.

“ ‘I got off him to take a drink at Murphy’s public-house,’ sez he, ‘an’ whin I wanted to mount him there was no person there to hould him for me—these two men are strangers, that I got afther that—he rared up an’ whin I put up me hand to defend myself, he med a grasp an’ bit the finger off, as if ’twas a carrot.’

“Whin that horse had a week’s good oats in him he was like a wild baste. There wasn’t a man about the place that would open the stable door, an’ even your father himself was in dread to face him. Everybody was beggin’ him to send for ‘The Whisperer,’ but your father never believed in him. He always said he was a humbug that used to drug horses. However, at last, to plase people, he sent for him. When Sullivan kem he went over to the stall an’ looked in the windy. ‘I know that horse,’ sez he. ‘He’s mad. I’ll have nothin’ to do wid him.’ ‘Whisper to him through the kayhole,’ sez your father, laffin’ at him. I always said afther that, that your father was right an’ ’twas drugs ‘The Whisperer’ used.

“There’s no doubt at all but what people enjoyed themselves more in th’ ould times than they do now. There was bether sport of every kind in the counthry, an’ more joviality connected wid it. You mightn’t see the same style an’ granjur that’s carried on to-day in the huntin’ field by young min an’ womin wid their motor-cars an’ their two horses a-piece, leppin’ walls an’ ditches whin their fathers an’ mothers

were continted to be leppin' counthers. Th' ould stock of gentry kep open house an' shared what they had wid their neighbours, as long as it lasted, an' longer. Your Honour's father was like that. He kep the hounds an' his door was never closed. There was only won thing he was fonder of than huntin' an' that was music. Afther a day's huntin', whin his dinner was ate, he'd have singin' an' music goin' on till near mornin'. He kep a man for singin' to him. His name was Hinery Baker. He was organist at the Protestant Cathedral at Cloyne, an' was the grandest singer at all. Of course, he wasn't what a person would call a regular gintleman, but he used to be left dine wid 'em all the same, so's they could have him sing to 'em while they were drinkin'. He was a small, fat little man. The big voice he had would come as a surprise to you when you'd look at him. Won night, afther a great day's huntin', Baker sang a huntin' song that plazed your father greatly.

“ ‘ You must have the nature of a foxhunter in you,’ sez your father, ‘ or you could never sing that song so well.’



“ ‘ I might,’ sez Baker, ‘ but I never got the chance to prove it.’

“ ‘ You won’t have that to say to-morrow night,’ sez your father. ‘ I’ll take you huntin’ in the mornin’.’ Baker was afther takin’ his own share of the drink, an’ was feelin’ big in himself, so he thanked your father, an’ said that th’ only thing that would stop him was the want of boots an’ breeches. ‘ Don’t let that trouble you,’ sez your father; ‘ I’ll fit you out.’ Now, your father was the biggest man in the county, an’ if Baker was five foot ’twas as much as he was, so there was great laughin’ among the gentlemen. I don’t suppose Baker was ever on a horse’s back in his life, so ’twas a great shock to him whin a big grey stallion was brought to the door for him next mornin’. He wasn’t able to rise his feet off of the ground in your father’s boots, an’ the waistband of the breeches was above under his jaw. They had to lave his own coat to him, for he could never ketch the reins wid the sleeves of your father’s coat hangin’ down over his hands. ‘ Don’t be in dread of him,’ sez your father. ‘ He can’t ate you as

long as you're in the saddle. Sing that huntin' song for me before you mount,' sez he. 'I may never hear it agin.'

"Poor Baker had to sing the song standin' on the mountin' block, wid the stallion snorthin' an' pawin' the ground alongside of him. 'You sang it a dale bether last night,' sez your father. 'Sing it agin,' sez he. So he did, but 'twas waker the voice was gettin' wid him. Afther that they put him up on the horse an' away wid 'em. The horse was a high trotter an' Baker was in great misery.

" 'I'm in dread these boots will stick in the stirrups if I fall off,' sez he.

" 'What harm is that,' sez your father; your feet won't stick in the boots.'

" 'Will he do anything to me if I fall off,' sez he.

" 'He will not,' sez your father, 'if there's another horse near him. I don't think he'd ever ate a man as long as he could get another horse to ate.' 'Twas church music Baker was singin' to himself, in place of huntin' songs for the rest of that day. He had his mind med up

to lep no fences, or run himself into no danger, but to slip away home the very minute the hunt began. God help us. 'Tis little he knew about that horse. The first blast of the horn he hard, up an' away wid him, takin' the finces as he met 'em. The two hands was busy wid Baker, houldin' on to the saddle behind an' before, so he left the reins go to the divil. 'Twasn't long till he was out in front of the hounds, wid your father an' the huntsmen cursin' him for all they knew—an' that was upwards of a damn sight. Before very long what between the fright an' the fitague, he lost his grip an' fell off in the middle of a ploughed field. At first he was glad that the horse didn't wait for him, but whin he tried to walk through the ploughed ground he found that he left a boot behind him every second step. He was in dread to lave your father's boots behind him, so he was carryin' 'em under his arm whin he met th' ould woman on the road that gev him a lift home in her donkey's cart. 'Tis ' Moore's Melodies ' he was singin' from that out. Your father could never get another huntin' song out of him."



## CHAPTER X

DAN MYNAHAN, HUNTSMAN

“HULLA! Hulla! Hulla! Look at her! Look at her! Begob, 'tis a wondher she didn't trip the mare. I can't help meself; I must be letting a screech out of me when I'll see a hare. 'Tis likely the rason of it is becos me father (the heavens be his bed in glory this night) was mindin' the Kishkame hounds the time I was born, an' before that. There's a hundred hares now in places where there wasn't won in them days. 'Tis often I heard me father sayin' that they'd be bush-batin' an' travellin' the counthry half the day before they'd rise wan. Only for the grand breed of hounds they had—bagles, black dogs wid red eyes, that could find the scint of a hare where she didn't travel for two days before that—'tis likely enough they'd never rise wan. The pack was broke up in the bad

times, but they're goin' as strong as ever now agin, an' stronger.

“ Dan Mynahan, that do be mindin' 'em, is a rale sportsman, an' a great warrant he has to screech an' blow a horn. Whin he'd be in good humour he'd remind you of the stheam-whistle at the Cramery, blowin' for won o'clock. He's in dread of his life of a horse, but the divil couldn't bate him on his two feet. I raly think he could run from Kishkame to Cork on the wan breath. They do be mostly huntin' on Sundays an' holy days, an' Dan conveys 'em to the meetin' place, but the ruil is that the first mounted man that comes, if his horse is aquil to facing the counthry, gets the loant of the horn from Dan for that day, but 'tis very little use for whoever has it to be blowin' it in won direction if Dan do be screechin' in another, for 'tis to him the hounds will surely go.

“ Young Murphy, the draper's son, thought 'twould add great granjur to him, there last year, if he had the mastherin' all to himself, so he promised a subscription an' bought himself a velvet cap. But God help us, he never rightly

knew what throuble was till thin, for there was war betune himself an' Dan from the first day. The first commincement of the war was whin Miss Murphy, that was in the millinery department, med a habit an' throusters for herself an' took to huntin'. She was very genteel entirely in herself, so 'twasn't long before she persuaded her brother, the Masther, that all the hounds had very vulgar, ugly names. 'No lady,' sez she, 'would consint to dirt her mouth with the like of "Doxey" and "Skelper" and "Tickler," so they must be all rechristened.' Well th' ind of that was that she got a list of garden seeds from young Hannigan, of the gineral shop, that she was very great wid at the time, and she wrote labels wid the names of all sorts of flowers an' med poor Dan tie 'em to the hounds, so that their new names should stick to 'em. There was 'Rosey' an' 'Posey' an' 'Daisy' an' 'Vilet,' an' many more like that, in the kinnel. The dear knows the same kinnel nayther looked nor smelt like a flower garden. Poor Dan was wild about it; there was won name that had him bate entirely, he could never think of it—



‘Paony.’ Miss Murphy was ever an’ always at him about it, but he was no scholar, so the label was no good to him. At lingham an’ at last, won day, ‘What’s that dog’s name?’ says she. ‘Paycock,’ says Dan. Sure that was the quare name to call him, an’ he rarin’ pups the same time. There isn’t a man in Kishkame would dar say ‘Paycock’ to Dan from that day to this; he’d surely give him his blood to drink, if he did. But thim names wasn’t very long a throuble to ayther Dan or the hounds, an’ ’twas a simple thing onchristened ’em agin. The pride was workin’ so strong in Miss Murphy over the throusters an’ the habit that she persuaded the brother to go out wid the foxhounds, to show his cap, an’ to take her wid him. Now she was afther makin’ a great pet of ‘Vilet.’ He was the biggest an’ blackest dog in the pack, an’ the father of ‘Paycock’s’ pups, an’ he was in an’ out of the millinery department, an’ up an’ down afther her, every place she’d go. He was won of th’ ould breed, with a great nose, so ’twas no throuble to him, as soon as he was left out of the stable, an hour afther she had

started, to pick up her trail an' start afther her at a gallop, yowlin' at every lep. The huntsman was just lavin' the foxhounds into the cover when he overtook her. In wid me brave 'Vilet' in the thick of 'em. Them that was there the same day toul't me afther that never before was there heard such music in that cover. 'Twas aquil to 'Vilet' whether 'twas a rabbit or a strange hound he'd meet, he'd lave a roar out of him. The foxhounds was runnin' wild about the place, thinkin' 'twas a fox he was huntin', an' the Masther was leppin' mad. He rode up to Murphy, an'—'Blast an' blow your impudence, you counther-jumper,' sez he, 'Why dar you bring your bagle out wid my hounds? Call him out an' take him to hell out of this, or I'll put you in a way that you won't lep a counther for twelve months.' 'Vilet! Vilet! Vilet!' says poor Murphy. 'Yerra, whist your mouth, Murphy,' said a boy that was standin' on the ditch, ' 'Twould be as well for you spind your breath whistlin' a jig to a milestone as to be callin' that dog Vilet. Don't I know him well? His name is Kruger.' At last, after much

persuasion, Mr. Murphy induced his sisther to call 'Kruger! Kruger! Kruger!' an' as soon as she did out comes 'Vilet' and away wid the three of 'em back home to Kishkame. Murphy med a present of the cap to Dan Mynahan, an' never ped the subscription, so now they're back agin wid th' ould names an' regulations. The first horseman at the meet gets the horn. There do be throuble over that same sometimes too. There was a new little clerk kem to the Bank, a brother's son to the docther's wife. A proud little shoneen, that had great boastin' an' shapin' about his ridin', tho' you'd aisy know, if you saw him, that it's but little he ever had to do with horses. The docther gev him the loan of his horse won holy day, when the hounds was meetin' above at Lismire bridge, an' for fear he wouldn't be in time to get the horn he was up before day an' dressin' himself in the best clothes he had. 'Tis unknown how long before the hounds he was at the bridge, for Dan was late the same day. There was a wake the night before a long piece wesht of Kishkame, an' 'tis surely there he was. Anyhow, he run every step



of the way from wherever he kem from, an' he was in a crool state whin he kem up, the shweat pourin' off of him, won shoe in aich hand, an' the horn under his oxther; moreover, 'twas aisy seen that he had drink taken.

“ ‘I'm the first here,’ says the little clerk, ‘so gimme the horn.’

“ ‘Here, 'tis for you,’ says Dan, givin' it to him. ‘Which ind of it do they blow where you come from?’ sez he, winkin' at the boys on the bridge. ‘Nayther ind of it,’ says the clerk, sez he, ‘till I'll have it washed afther you.’ With that he kem down off of the horse an' walkin' down to the bank of the river, comminced washin' an' rincin' the horn. What boys was on the bridge had like to bust themselves laffin', an' the timper an' the drink riz together in Dan. The little clerk was on his stoop on the brink of the river, whin Dan cot him by the sate of the little breeches. ‘If the horn must be washed,’ sez he, ‘the huntsman must be washed too.’ With that he hove him into the middle of the strame like won would be drowndin' a pup. Dan had to strip off

afther an' go divin' for the horn, but that was no satisfaction to the poor little clerk, for he was nearly home be thin. They had no hunt that day, for the hare they had 'soho'd' was kilt be greyhounds before they kem, an' be the time they were carried all the way up to Thade Keefe's land on a false report the drink was fadin' in Dan, an' he was gettin' half careless whether they'd rise won or not. He met ould Thade above, an'—'Is it long since you see a hare?' sez he. 'I didn't see a hare since last June twelve months, of a Sunday mornin' afther Mass,' says Thade. ''Tis the way it was,' sez he. 'Th' ould gun I have was me father's before me, an' a great gun she was, an' great work she have done, both good an' bad. The only fault I have with her is that I can't get the loadin' of her nearer than Killarney. 'Tis the caps have me bate; 'tis aisy to come at powdher an' shot. Well, the charge was in her for a lingth of time, maybe two years, an' I had but the won cap that was on her, an' another that I found betune the two linin's of an ould waistcoat that I didn't wear for years before

that. The woman was always at me to lave go the shot an' put the gun away for good in the hole behind the settle, where she was kep' in th' ould times whin there was licences, so this Sunday mornin' I took her out wid me maning to lave her go at the first thing I'd see, even if it was a crow itself. I was walkin' along the headland of the pitaty garden, whin I looked down betune two drills an' seen somethin'. I couldn't rightly make out was it a clod or a hare, an' the more I was lookin' the more I was betune two minds about it. Well, 'twas in that very drill I left the grubber the night before when I untackled the horse, so I lid down on me brust an' put the muzzle of the gun on the grubber an' closed won eye an' took a great aim. 'Now,' sez I, 'win or lose, I'll lave her go. But 'twas throublin' me all through, for fear it might be a clod, so I riz up secondly agin an' took another look. ' 'Tis surely a clod,' sez I, 'for there isn't a move out of it. But maybe,' sez I, 'it'll turn out to be a misfire afther all, so here goes.' Down wid me agin an' put the gun up on the grubber, where she was before. I



don't know how long was I aimin', for I couldn't find it in me heart to pull the thricker, an' maybe waste the charge. I mightn't ever pull it, only for what happened. A bastard greyhound I left behind me at the house to folly me over, an' me to never hear or feel a sound of him till he stuck his tongue into me ear, an' took a lep out of me that left go the shot. The next other thing I knew was to see the dog runnin' down the drill, an' ketchin' the finest hare you ever seen, an' the hind part of her mostly blown off from the grand aim I took. She was rarin' two pusheens in the same drill, but the dog ate 'em, an' there isn't seed or breed of a hare in the place ever since.'

"If I toult you that Dan Mynahan never rode a horse, I toult your Honour a lie, for there was won time he took a quare ride. 'Twas on the day after Christmas, St. Stephens's Day, an' that's ever an' always a great day for huntin' an' killin' everything, from the wran up. There was snow on the ground, but the like of that of a thrifle wouldn't keep the Kishkame hounds inside, especially as Dan knew well that many a

wan that would be huntin' that day would be apt to have a bottle wid him. Now poor Dan wasn't too well in himself that same mornin', for he slept out the night before. He always med a habit of taking a bit of a doze wherever the drink would overtake him, an' where should he stretch himself this night but on the side of the public road. He was taking a loaf of bread home wid him for his breakfast in the mornin', so he put it onder his head for a bolster an' med himself very comfortable wid his head towards the ditch an' his feet out in the road.

“ He wasn't very long there till here comes the postman on a bicycle. The divil a thing the poor man seen till he seen stars, for he got a thrip over Dan's leg that med pieces of himself an' his masheen. To mind the matther, Dan gev him a sevaré bating for wakin' him. But he had sinse enough to make off wid himself, in spite of a lame leg, before he could be sworn to, it being very dark at the time. The next mornin' his inshtep was as black as a pot an' 'tis very hardly he could travel at all. How under the canopy of heavin he was to get the hounds

to the meet he didn't know. Just as he had his mind med up to hop over an' spind the rest of the day in Donohue's public-house, who should come along but a gorsoon ridin' an ould horse that some person had sint in for a Christmas-box to the hounds. There seemed to be a small share of life in him still, but not enough to frighten Dan, so he fild a bag wid hay an' put it across the back so as to keep the bones from skinnin' him, lept on, an' away wid him. Bate him or bate him not, he couldn't get more than a slow walk out of him, an' whin he kem to where the snow was a bit deeper he shtopped entirely under him. It must be the bating that kept the life in him, for the moment Dan kem down off of him he lid down an' died. Poor Dan must have felt very lonesome standing there in the snow on won leg wid the corpse alongside of him, an' the pack of hounds shiverin' an' shakin' with the cold, an' some of the most sinsible of 'em beginning to face towards home agin. However, it wasn't very long till an ould woman kem along wid an ass-cart an' gev him a lift for the remainder of the journey. It commined



to snow hard agin, so he put the hounds into a stable an' himself an' the boys spint the rest of the day card-playin' an' drinkin'. Before the day was out Dan was so jovial in himself that he couldn't rightly say which leg he was lame in, an' when the time kem to go home he was fairly well able to travel wid the help of two sticks. He got back to the kinnel well enough, but 'twas thin the rale trouble kem on him. He'd clean forgotten that th' ould horse was intended for the hounds' supper that night, an' the divil another taste was there in the place to give 'em. Now Dan was a rale sportsman, an' would rather go widout his supper himself (as long as he had a few drinks in him) than see his hounds hungry. So he commined blowin' the horn an' screechin', to put a bit of element into himself an' themselves, picked up the two sticks an' away wid him, every step of the way back to where he left the corpse in the mornin'. Believe me, it wasn't too aisy to tear the hide off of it wid the frost that was in it, an' wid a knife that would have you tired before you'd have a pipe of tobacco cut wid it. Nothin' but the thought of the whisky he'd be

able to distil out of the skin (it was worth five shillings, an' you'd get a glass that would rise a fog out of your mouth for four pence below at Donohue's) kep him going till the job was done. Having stuffed it into the hay-bag, he shouldered it every step of the way back, an' never went to bed till he had it drank. The hounds kem back won be won according to their appetites, an' that's the first an' last time Dan Mynahan rode to the meet."

## CHAPTER XI

### SHOOTIN' THE MOON

" I BEG your Honour's pardon. Have you ere a sup of whisky about you? I'm out all night an' I have a kind of an inwardly pain. 'Tis the sheriff an' two bailiffs I had on the car, an' another carload of police followin' us. 'Twould be as well for us stay in bed. The divil a thing was there for us to saze but the cat. 'Twas known we were comin' an' they had all the cattle shifted. They surely have 'em back on the land agin by this. 'Twasn't like the time I druv Fitzgerald th' agent to make a sazure for rint on won Fraser, a Scotchman that kem to this counthry to tache the poor ignorant Irish how to farm. He held the farm for five years an' never ped a pinny of rint. There was farmers in Ireland that knew how to do that before he was born. He had every kind of a new masheen



that you ever saw an' more. There was some of 'em that he didn't know the use of himself. He never ped for them ayther. I'd forgive him everything, only the big hairy baste of a Clydesdale stallion he had pisonin' the counthry. A regular man-ater. Nobody could handle him only Fraser himself. 'Twas through a hole in the wall he was fed, an' 'twas wid a gaff he used to ketch him. Before Fraser kem to these parts he was steward to some lord up the counthry. The like of them are very apt to make fortunes for thimselves while they're farmin' for the gintry, but I never see won of 'em that didn't go bruk when he started on his own account. I suppose they do be too long in the habit of sellin' chape an' buying dear. For a long time Fitzgerald thought he'd pay becos he was a Scotchman an' a Prodestant, an' spint so much of his time wid a lord. If he might ax me I'd tell him that th' only thing the like of him would be sure to do was to pison foxes an' put thorny wire all around his land.

“ At length an' at last the patience gev out wid Fitzgerald, an' he sarved a writ on him, an'

med arrangements wid the sheriff to saze the stock. The night before the bailiffs were expected word kem to Fitz that Fraser was 'shootin' the moon.' He sent for me an' I druv him out. Just as we got to the gate we hard great thramplin' an' neighin' comin' down the bohereen.

" 'Ha, ha,' sez Fitz, 'we're in time afther all. He's just drivin' off the stock. Pull the car across the gate an' we'll stop 'em.'

" So I did. The next thing I saw was the two big hairy legs of the Clydesdale across the drivin' sate an' Fitz climbin' across the car to my side.

" 'For God's sake don't lave him ate the mare on me,' sez I.

" 'He'll verra likely do it in spite o' me,' sez Fraser. 'Hit him on the head wid the butt of the whip.'

" I was batin' him into the two eyes for five minutes before I got him down off the car. The minute he got his fore legs on the ground he left a squeal out of him like tin pigs an' turned his hind part towards us. I didn't wait for what

was comin', but Fitz did. He only left go won kick, but that was enough. Car, mare, Fitz, an' all was put across the road into the dyke.

"When Fitz got on his legs, 'Take that horse back to the stable,' sez he.

" 'Take it yourself,' sez Fraser.

" 'Twas wid a long bar of iron he was ladin' him to keep him from runnin' in on him an' atin' him.

" 'I'm takin' possession of him for the rint,' sez Fitz.

" 'If you give me any of your chat I'll turn him loose to you,' sez Fraser.

" 'For the honour of God, don't, sir,' sez I. 'He'll kill the two of us an' ate the mare.'

" 'Jerry,' sez Fitz, 'I'll give you a sovereign if you'll take that horse back to the stable.'

" 'Not givin' you a short answer, sir,' sez I, 'I'll do no such a thing.'

" 'I'm not goin' to spind the night here wid you,' sez Fraser. 'Take your horse since you're claimin' him.'

" Wid that he kem over to Fitz an' offered the bar of iron to him. Fitz lepped up on the



ditch an'—'Take that horse away,' sez he. 'You're a witness to that, Jerry,' sez Fraser.

" 'I am,' sez I.

" Away wid him down the road an' we walkin' a piece behind him. I was in dread to pass him. Whin we kem to the cross he turned off an' we could hear that divil of a horse roarin' an' squealin' till we were nearly back at home.

" There was law about that same horse afther that, an' I was a witness. 'Twas the first time I ever was in the box an' wid the blessin' of God 'twill be the last. I thought I wasn't as big as your fist, an' the Judge looked like a mountain to me. All I was there for was to swear that Fitz toul't Fraser to take the horse away wid him. So I did. Afther that Fitz's lawyer kem at me.

" 'Why should Mr. Fitzgerald make Fraser a present of the horse,' sez he.

" 'For the same rason that everybody makes presents,' sez I. 'Becos he had no use for him himself.'

" 'This is only wastin' the time of the coort,' sez the judge. 'Next case,' sez he.

“ Any man that goes to law about a horse or a woman is dangerously mad, an’ should be put where he couldn’t hurt himself. Judges knows nothin’ about horses, but from all accounts there’s some of ’em that knows plinty about women. Anyway, I’m always noticin’ that a good-lookin’ woman gets great fair play in coort. The difference between the two classes of cases is that the perjury of a servant gerrul mostly decides the won an’ th’ ignorance of the Judge and the hard swearin’ of a bet decides th’ other. There should be a law passed to stop judges from makin’ jokes on the binch. ’Tisn’t for that they’re ped, an’ ’tis ayther at your expinse or mine they’re makin’ ’em. Like the time in a horse case whin the witness said, ‘ He was lame from splints, me lord.’ ‘ The horse’s leg must have been broke,’ said his lordship to the jury, ‘ or ’twouldn’t be in splints.’

“ ‘ Ha ! ha ! ha ! ’ sez the jury, and the poor man that had a right to win his case lost it. There was great fun over a case here not long ago, but it never kem to law. An innocent crature of a young soldier officer wint to a certain dalin

man an' bought a black horse from him for sixty pounds. The same boy would hardly know a horse from a mare, but he had a great opinion of himself. He tuk the horse back to barracks. I don't know what the rest of the boys said to him, but at all events they persuaded him that he got a great stick an' that the horse was no good at all. He returned him to the daler an' asked for his money back. 'No,' sez the daler, 'but I'll give you another horse in place of him.'

"Now, I needn't tell your Honour that all black horses turns blue when they're clipped. The first thing the daler did was to clip the horse. Down comes the little soldier an' afther ridin' what horses was in the yard, no horse would suit him but the blue won that was in the corner box.

" 'What do you want for him?' sez he.

" 'One hundred and twinty pounds,' sez the daler.

"He ped for him on the spot an' tuk him away. He was ridin' him for a month an' likin' him well before the black hair grew on him agin. He'd never know the horse himself, but



some person toul't him what he was afther doin'. The story got out an' the rest of the boys med a regular hare of him. They wouldn't let him get his hair cut, for fear his mother might disown him, an' whin he changed his clothes they had to be reintroduced to him. The next time he rode the horse huntin' he was near cryin' before night. Every person he'd meet would ax him—

“ ‘ Is that the black horse or the blue horse, or the black an' blue horse ? Was it sixty or a hundred an' twinty you gev for him, or did you get him in a swop ? ’

“ The poor little fella was loosin' his appetite an' health over it, till the daler tuk compassion on him an' gev him back his sixty pounds. He's ridin' the horse still. They call him ' The Clipper. '

“ I remember the time whin there was no masheens for clippin' horses. 'Tis wid a scissors an' comb they was done. Before that agin they used to be lathered an' shaved, but I never saw that. From tin to twelve shillins was the price for clippin' a horse, so they were never done more than once in the sason. They

couldn't be done at all till the hair was long enough for the comb to take a hault, an' it tuk a regular tradesman to make a dacent job. There was only the won man in these parts fit to clip gintlemen's horses, an' he was an independant blaguard. 'Dinny the clipper' they called him. 'Tis by night he mostly worked, so that the horses wouldn't be kep idle. It tuk a whole night to clip a horse. In them days there was a great huntin' man named Power livin' here. He kep a dale of fine horses, but was very tight about his money. Himself and Dinny was always arguin' about the price of clippin', an' won time afther all the horses was finished he cut him down a shillin' a-head. Dinny was mad angry, but could do nothing at that time. Next sason, agin he was sint for to clip the hunters, an' he wint to work as usual widout sayin' a word about the price. 'Twas by night he was workin'. When the groom kem in the mornin' there wasn't trace or tidin's of Dinny, an' whin he stript the clothes off the horse there he was all clipt into patterns. His ribs and every other bone in his body was marked

out on him like the skeleton of a horse. There was a dozen horses in the stable, an' every won of 'em was done the same way, only a black horse that Power thought the whole woruld of. He had a set of harness marked out on him. 'Twas the greatest night's clippin' I ever knew won man to do. There was huntin' that day at Power's own place, an' he was wild becos he couldn't show himself. He tuk to his bed an' said he was sick, but of course the story got out in spite of him. There was no other clipper to be got for love or money, so you may be sure that Dinny med him pay dear before he took the pictures off the horses.

"I never see a more pinurous man than Power was in some ways, although he was free enough in others. No expinse was spared in the feedin' an' clothin' of his horses, but the min he'd have carin' 'em would be a disgrace to any gintleman at a meet of the hounds. 'Tis in ould cast-off clothes of his own they'd be dressed an' indeed any coat the same man would cast wouldn't make a pauper too proud of his personal appearance if he had to wear it. Signs by, any



dacent groom wouldn't stay wid him. If there was a drunken blaguard missin' any place in the counthry, 'tis in Power's stable he'd surely be found. He was gettin' to be an' ould man before he could harden his heart to face the expinse of matrimony, but at long last he was cot by a neighbourin' widda. Her first husband was a gineral in th' army. A very smart gintleman that always kep himself an' every man about his place drilled an' dressed as if he didn't know what minute they'd be called out for inspection. You'd seldom see him in the same shute of clothes two days runnin'. The shute he'd have for fishin' wouldn't do him for shootin' nor ridin' nor for nothin' else but fishin', an so on wid everything else he'd be doin'. When you'd be used to him you could tell what he was goin' to do by the clothes he'd be wearin'. 'Tis unknown what clothes he had. I always said that only for Power bein' so much fatter an' bigger than him he'd surely be seen wearin' his clothes afther marryin' his widda. He did worse wid 'em.

“ Now the poor gineral had a soldier servant that was as clane an' particular about his clothes

as himself. His time was up, so he stied on wid the widda as groom, but himself an' Power was quarrellin' from the very first. The two stables was kep separate, an' Mrs. Power had her own groom. Power kep on the same blaguards he always had, but people were noticin' that they were bether dressed lately. The row that bruk up the double establishment kem on th' openin' day of the sason. There was a very large meet, an' of course all the gintlemen's servants were wearin' their new clothes. Mrs. Power's groom hadn't a thing on him, but what was new out of the shop an' was lookin' very smart intirely. Power's blaguard was dressed in a check shootin' coat an' knickerbockers wid a pair of horse bandages round his shins in place of gaiters. Just as Power was mountin' his horse the mistress's groom called out at the top of his voice, so that all the gintlemen could hear him—

“ ‘ You have no respect for the dead, Mr. Power.’

“ ‘ What do you mane? ’ sez Power.

“ ‘ ’Tis well for you,’ sez the groom, ‘ that there was a ton weight of a tombstone put down

on the poor gineral, or he'd rise up when he'd think of you. Not continted wid wearin' his wife an' his shirts, there you are puttin' the rest of his clothes on drunken images like that thing there.'

"There was never such laffin' at a meet before. Mrs. Power turned round an wint straight home, an' 'twasn't long till Power followed her. I hard that they had a desperate 'who shall' when she refused to sack the soldier. Anyhow, 'twasn't more than three months till there was a separation drawn up between 'em. The soldier is livin' wid her still."



## CHAPTER XII

### MISS LEROY

‘TAKE a good look at that lady whin we’re passin’ her. I’ll engage you niver saw the like of her before. No, nor if you was to search the worruld wid a tooth-coomb from Skibbereen to Scotland, an’ from Tralee to Timbuctoo—wherever it is—you wouldn’t find her aquil. Look at her now! Ha, ha, there’s a skelp she hit him! She’s five years older than myself. I know it well, for she’s drawin’ the pinsion these two years, an’ I won’t be qualified for it for three years more. That’s a three-year-old of Growley’s she’s ridin’, an’ ’tis to meet the Harriers she’s goin’. You must have noticed that it’s an ould-fashioned habit she’s wearin’. Won of the kind that has petticoats goin’ wid it. She med every tack of it, an’ the saddle she has, is oulder than herself. There’s hardly a bit that

kem out of the shop in it now, the way she has it pieced an' patched. While I know her, she's wearin' her hair cut like a man. That isn't the jockey cap she won the race in—that an' the jacket belongin' to it are hangin' up at home—but 'tis med afther the same pattern. She's surely the only person in the worruld to-day that's livin' on charity in an alms-house an' huntin' two or three days a week.

“ If I was to drive your Honour all the way to Dublin, I wouldn't have time to tell you all the quare things she have done in her life. I'm sure I don't know the half of 'em meself. Her name is Miss Joan Leroy. 'Tis John Leary she called herself whin she was on the turf. Her father was a great sportin' man. He kep' hounds an' race-horses an' died a pauper. His poor widow an' daughter was glad to get into won of th' alms-houses afther his death. There's fifty pounds a year goin' wid every house, an' 'tis on that they lived. I was tould that Miss Leroy was one of the best lookin' gerruls in the counthry at that time, an' 'tis aisy to believe it, for she has a bit of style about her to-day. Her mother

wouldn't lave her go out to airn her livin', but kep' her there shut up wid a lot of ould decayed ladies like herself. 'Twould be better for the poor thing to be dead, an' she knew it. She had a great taste for horses from the first, an' never let the mother sell the saddle which was th' only thing saved when the smash kem. At first she used to be ridin' any ould horse she could get the loan of from the farmers, but it wasn't very long till she was breakin' colts for 'em. She lived that kind of life till she was over twinty years of age. Thin some ould relation died an' left her a thousand pounds. Everybody was sayin' what a fine thing 'twas for her to have forty pounds a year, an' that, maybe, wid the help of God, it might be the manes of gettin' her married to some dacent man, but what she said herself was—

“ ‘ I'm livin' on charity since I was born, an' never saw a day's life or fun. What good is forty pounds a year to anybody? Here's out wid me to see life as far as the thousand pounds will go.' So she did.

“ The first thing she did was to buy two



racehorses. She kep' the rest of the money in her pocket to bet wid. Won was a mare called 'Trick of the loop.' I never hard the name of th' other, so I suppose he was no good. The mare was a good won, an' always won her races whin she was wanted to. Money was rowlin' in, an' I dunno but what it might have gone on that way for a long time if Miss Leroy was only continted to stick to the small counthry meeting. There was races in mostly every parish them days. 'Twas at Ballybunion that the first misfortune struck her. She med a match wid a Kerry man for a hundred pounds a side—I disremember his name—she was to ride the mare herself. So she did. There was a dale of talk about it at the time, for 'tis in a man's saddle an' clothes she rode. There would be no notice taken of the like now, but she was the first woman that was ever seen straddled on a horse. She backed herself very heavy, an' she won the race. That ruined her. Nothin' would do her now but to buy more horses an' go racin' wid the bloods at the Curragh. She trained her own horses, an' that was the last nail in her coffin.

She'd ride 'em, too, only that the laws of racin' wouldn't allow her. 'Twasn't more than six months till she was a pauper. 'Twas some place in the North that the last pinny was robbed off her. She started for home, but had only the price of a ticket as far as Charleville. She walked every step of the way from there to her mother's alms-house carryin' the saddle. The mother died soon afther, an' 'twas thought she'd be turned out, but it seems she had good friends on the board that manages the charity, so she was put on in place of her mother.

“'Tisn't long ago since I hard her sayin' that she never repinted of what she did. 'I'm living just as happy on fifty pounds a year as I would on ninety,' sez she, 'an' nobody can rob me of the three years' life I saw. I'm an ould woman now,' sez she, 'an' thim were th' only three years I ever lived. The rest of it wasn't livin', but growin' like a turnip. 'Tis often I closes me eyes an' sees the race I rode an' all the fun an' excitement I had, as I sits by the fire wid the racin' jacket in me lap an' the whip in me hand. There's only won thing I regret, an'

that's "Trick of the loop"; I'd give the thousand pounds for her to-morrow if I had it agin.'

"More power to her. She's the rale game. As ould as she is, she'd do the very same to-morrow if she had the money. 'Tisn't more than six or seven years ago since she tuk the consate out of all the young Buckeens that hunts wid the harriers. The season always finishes up wid a grand stag-hunt. A bunch of blue ribbons do be tied to the deer's horns, an' the man that gets 'em is the haro. Miss Leroy was ridin' much the same kind of a horse as the won you see her on to-day. Nothin' but hair outside an' turnips within, not a feed of oats in him. 'Twas a pet deer they were hunting, that often before finished the sason for 'em, an' he wasn't much in dread of the little hounds. 'Tis the same coorse he always ran. Three or four times round the farm and then into the river. 'Twas so well known that none of the Buckeens ever wore their best clothes on the last day for fear of spoilin' 'em when they wint in to get the ribbons. The round the deer gev just suited Miss Leroy an' her hairy coult. She knew he'd surely come



back to the river, so 'twas there she waited. There was a terrible flood the same day, you couldn't rightly tell where the bed of the river was, for 'twas out over the banks. Here comes the deer, an' in wid him at the very deepest place. He swam out to a little island, an' there he stood wid nothin' but the ribbons showin' above the wather.

“For the last half-hour some of the lads had the hounds bate entirely, an' were only ridin' at the deer tryin' to snatch the ribbons off him before he'd get into the wather. When they kem to the bank and saw the state of the flood, it tuk all the steam out of 'em.

“‘I can't swim!’ sez won.

“‘My horse won't face it!’ sez another, spurrin' him an houldin' him back at the same time. The divil a word Miss Leroy said, only waded in through the shallow wather where 'twas out over the field. Before the poor coult knew where he was, he fell over the bank into the deep. Down to the bottom they wint; but when they came up they were swimming in the right direction. She got the ribbons and swam

back wid 'em. When the min kem to help her out—

“‘No,’ sez she, ‘don’t dar put a hand on me or me horse! If I was drowned, ’twould be agin me will that a cowardly crew like ye should be let sit on me inquest.’

“‘’Twould be bether for you go home quick, Miss, an’ change your clothes,’ sez won of ’em, tryin’ to soft sawder her.

“‘Didn’t your mother ever tell you, when she was washin’ you in salt wather,’ sez she, ‘that if you wet your head at first, you’d never ketch cold? Maybe she never washed you.’

“She just lid down on the flat of her back an’ stuck her two legs up in th’ air to let the wather run out of her boots.

“‘I’ll lave the clothes dry on me,’ sez she, ‘for fear they’d shrink.’ So she did. There’s no doubt but what there was bether stuff put in the people that was med seventy years ago than they’re usin’ now.

“As hard an’ manly as she looks, there’s no won I’d call upon so soon if I was in throuble or sickness. She gives away more to childer than

many a rich person. 'Tis often you'd see her kickin' a football wid 'em like won of themselves when they're left out of school, an' I know she sometimes goes widout her dinner so as to be able to buy shugar-stick. 'Tisn't long ago since won of the poor ladies died of some bad disase. She had no person belongin' to her, an' the docther wanted to send her to an incurable home. The poor crature was greatly agin this. She toul Miss Leroy her trouble.

"'I'll see that you're sent nowhere agin your will,' sez she.

"Out she wint, an' locked the door of her little cottage an' put the key in her pocket. She never left the sick lady's bedside for six months, an' they tell me the nursin' of that case was no child's play. The part that kem hardest on her was that 'twas in the huntin' sason. She never goes to church, an' I'm toul that herself an' the Minister don't spake. They fell out over a horse he was drivin' wid a gall under the collar. All the same, I think that if we're in her company in the next worruld we'll be a good piece out from the fire. I was near forgettin'



to tell you about the grand dinner party she gev in Ballybunion the time she rode the race. She had more money that night than she ever had before or since, an' nothin' would do her but that she must celebrate her victory. She was the talk of Kerry afther the way she rode in a man's saddle an' clothes, an' none of the women would have any dalin' wid her. 'Tis little that troubled her.

“ ‘Dinner'll be there for anybody that likes to come,’ sez she; ‘all the recommendation I'll want from a guest is a clane face an' hands.’ ’Twas all very fine to be talkin' that way about a big dinner in Ballybunion; but the thing was, Where would you get it? There was no hotel in them days. What would they want won for when the races only kem once a year an' the pig fair once a month? Mate was the difficulty. You could get plenty whisky an' porther. There was but the won butcher, an' 'tis seldom he kilt a cow. The whole village would be talkin' about that cow for a month before she was slaughtered, for of course she couldn't be kilt till all the mate was engaged.

As your Honour knows, 'tis all black cattle they have in Kerry. When the butcher would be making up his mind to kill, he'd put a halther on the cow an' lade her down the street wid a lump of chalk in won of his hands. His wife would walk in front of him ringin' a bell an' callin' out, "Ahoy! ahoy! I'm givin' notice that a baste will be kilt on Tuesday (ring the bell). Anybody wantin' mate must order it now. Ahoy! (ring the bell)." Then you'd see all the housekeepers walkin' out an' examine the cow. When their minds would be med up as to what would suit 'em, they'd take the chalk an' mark the piece out. The chalk showed up very plain on the black baste. The cow would be led down the street an' back again. If she was all mapped out when she kem back she'd be kilt that day; if not, she'd be put back for another week.

"There was two days' racin' in Ballybunion, an' 'twas on the first that Miss Leroy won her race. 'Twas on the evenin' of the second that she was to give the dinner. There was no railway there then, so whatever she meant to have

must be got on the spot. Down she went to the butcher an' sez she, 'I want about forty pounds of roastin' beef at once.'

"'Won't the latter end of next week do?' sez he.

"'Twill not,' sez she. 'I must have it now.'

"'You can't get it,' sez the butcher. 'There's only tin pounds of steak an' a small boilin' piece marked out on the cow yet. It might be the week afther next before she'd be all engaged.'

"'What do you want for the whole cow?' sez Miss Leroy.

"'Such a price,' sez he.

"'I'll take her,' sez she. 'Kill her in a hurry. She must be cooked to-morrow evenin'.'

"So she was.

"Of course forty or fifty pounds of mate would be plinty for the dinner Miss Leroy wanted, so whin she had to buy the whole cow, she had to change her plans.

"'I'll give one dinner for the rich an' another for the poor,' sez she.



“The dinner for the gentry was to be praties an’ whisky an’ beef an’ cabbage. The dinner for the poor, porther an’ beef. ’Twas aisy enough to get the dinner for the gentry cooked in the public-house, but she didn’t know how to get nearly a whole cow cooked for the poor. At last she thought of consultin’ the parish priest.

“‘There was a dale of sheep-stalin’ whin I first kem to the parish, thirty years ago,’ sez he, ‘an’ ’tis in the lime-kilns the thieves used to cook ’em. There’s a kiln in full blast just outside the village,’ sez he. ‘Give ’em the cow, an’ I’ll engage they’ll cook her to suit themselves.’ So she did. She gev ’em a barrel of porther, an’ tin gallons of whisky along wid the mate. All the tinkers an’ tramps in that part of Ireland collected together an’ held atin’ an’ drinkin’ an’ batin’ won another for two days an’ nights. ’Twas the grandest dinner that was ever ate in Ballybunion before or since.’”

## CHAPTER XIII

### SUMMERSFIELD CASTLE

“THAT’S Summersfield Castle. There’s nobody livin’ in it now but a caretaker. I don’t know where Summers is. He disappeared years ago, an’ no person ever heard of him since. He was a wild divil while he lasted, but that wasn’t long. I spint a quare night in that house won time, an’ the gintlemen I druv there spint a quarer.

“Summers’ father died when this man was a child, an’ he was brought up by a fool of a mother he had. She never sent him to school, an’ ’twas by governesses he was educated. He was sixteen years of age whin the won that finished his education kem. I never rightly knew whether ’twas she that eloped wid him, or him that eloped wid her. It came to the same thing in th’ end. Anyway when they gev a big dinner party to celebrate his comin’ of age,

his son was able to make a speech an' return thanks, when they drank his father's health. That was a good beginnin'. Soon afther that he left the wife an' wint sailin' all over the woruld in ships. I dunno was he a captain or a common sailor, or what was he, but the next time I saw him he was out huntin' wid the fox-hounds, dressed in a blue woollen jersey wid an anchor across his breast, an' a fur cap on his head. Nothin' in the shape of a fince would stop him, an' if he wasn't in the saddle he was on some other part of the horse. Soon afther that he got a pack of hounds of his own. You see that wall to the wesht of the castle. That's the deer park. 'Twas deer he hunted whin he wasn't huntin' sheep dogs or greyhounds. He had no deer cart or anything of that kind at all. He'd just take part of the pack into the park an' lave 'em hunt the deer till won of them would lep out over the wall. The pack would be laid on that won. They used to have great huntin'. The way I kem to spind a night there was like this. There was a young gintleman named Fair that was



master of the foxhounds for won sason. Summers axed him to have a lawn meet at the castle as he was givin' a great ball party. So he did. I druv him down an' sted the night, so as to bring him back next day. 'Twas a lucky job for me that I got there wid daylight, or I'd get what the rest of the party got. There's what they call a moat round the castle. I believe it had deep wather in it at won time, but at the time I'm talkin' of 'twas mostly mud an' ould bottles an' drowned kittens was in it.

"It seems that Summers was quarrellin' wid nearly all the neighbourin' gentry over ridin' through their gardens afther his deer, an' atin' their pet dogs wid his hounds. 'Twas his wife was givin' this ball party to try an' make friends wid 'em all agin. If she might lave mathers as they were, she'd be bether off. 'Twas black dark airly in the night, although there was a fine moon later. Only for that 'tis a coffin I'd be bringin' back wid me.

"'The drive is very bad,' sez Summers to his wife, 'so I'll put lamps all along the two sides of it, to keep the carriages straight.'

“She was very thankful to him, although she should have known him bether. He went out to the lodge an’ toul’t th’ ould woman that lived in it, to keep the gate closed till there were a good many carriages there waitin’ an’ then to lave ’em all in together. So she did. Poor Mrs. Summers was waitin’ in the hall to receive her guests whin she hard the murdher bein’ committed outside. Such screechin’ an’ bawlin’ an’ breakin’ of glass you never hard. In the middle of the row, out runs Summers dressed in his sailor’s clothes wid a rope tied around his body, an’ a lifebuoy in his hand.

“‘They’re all drowndin’,’ sez he, ‘come out an’ see me save ’em.’

“Whin Mr. Fair an’ the rest of the gintlemen that were stayin’ in the house got outside, the moat was full up of carriages an’ horses, an’ Summers was standin’ on the bank throwin’ the lifebuoy to an ould lady that was up to her neck in the mud. Nobody was kilt, but there was no ball party, an’ poor Mrs. Summers was on worse terms than ever wid her neighbours. How did it happen? Summers to shift all the

lamps an' to mark out a road wid 'em right into the moat.

"That was all a great surprise to my poor young gintleman, for he never before saw the like of that of a party, but he got a bigger surprise before he left the castle.

"Whin the ball had to be given up, the party that was in the castle settled themselves down to drinkin' an' card playin' an' enjoyed themselves well. About two or three o'clock in the mornin' Mr. Fair said, that as he had to be huntin' the hounds in the mornin', he'd like to go to bed. Summers didn't approve of this at all.

"'What do you want to go to bed for,' sez he, 'whin you're not drunk? You're not half drunk, indeed I don't think you're drunk at all.'

"Mr. Fair insisted on it an' got a candle an' wint upstairs.

"Now I must tell you that they niver finished buildin' that castle. 'Tisn't finished yet, an' I don't suppose it ever will be. There's won big tower that never was roofed or floored. Just the four walls an' nothin' else. Mr. Fair's room



was on the second floor, but he med a mistake an' wint up to the third. Maybe he was drunker than Summers thought. 'Twas the cook was sleepin' in the first room he wint into. The screech she left out of her confused him, so he didn't know which door he'd bether try next, but at last he thought that the door at th' end of the passage might be the right won. Down he walked to it in a hurry an' threw it open. Just as he was steppin' in he saw the moon. The fright he got med him drop the candle, an' 'twas nearly a minute before he hard it strike the ground. There was no room there at all. As soon as he recovered himself he went back downstairs to the party an' toul't his story.

“ ‘The divil's cure to you,’ sez Summers. ‘Maybe that will be a warnin’ to you not to go to bed while you’re able.’

“ They didn't go to bed at all that night, an' indeed you'd have compassion for my poor young gentleman, if you saw the state of him whin he came out to mount his horse. The fright he got in the night was nothin' to what he got in the mornin'.

“The hounds were at the door before any of the party wint to dress themselves for huntin’.

“‘There’s no hurry,’ sez Summers. ‘I don’t suppose there’ll be very many out to-day, afther the ‘pleasant party’ they had in the moat last night.’ ’Twas true for him, there was nobody out that day but themselves.

“When Mr. Fair was comin’ out of his room, dressed in his red coat an’ boots an’ spurs, Summers met him at the door and sez, ‘Come wid me before you go down an’ I’ll show you the finest view in the wide woruld.’

“He took him up to the top floor of the castle an’ opened the same door where he nearly wint to bed with the moon the night before. There was a narrow plank stretching across to another part of the tower. Summers ran across this like a monkey. ‘Come on,’ sez he to Fair, ‘or will I come back an’ take you over on my back?’ Fair walked over widout givin’ himself time to think about it. They looked at the view awhile, an’ then Summers ran back agin across the plank. Fair put won foot on it an’ looked down to the bottom of the tower. That settled it.

The more he looked at it, the more in dread he bekem.

“‘Straddle yourself on it an’ close your eyes,’ sez Summers.

“‘Not if you gave me ten thousand pounds,’ sez Fair. ‘Get a ladder,’ sez he.

“‘There isn’t a ladder nearer than Limerick that would reach you,’ sez Summers. They were there for an hour before Summers thought of gettin’ a rope to tie round Fair’s waist.

“‘I’ll fasten it over here,’ sez he, ‘so that if you fall you won’t fall far an’ I can haul you up.’

“That gave Fair great courage, an’ he closed his eyes an’ sat down astride of the plank an’ shoved himself across that way. As soon as he was safe over, Summers held out the rope to him, an’ sez: ‘Look at this.’ He gave it a pull between his two hands an’ broke it. ‘’Tis an ould rope,’ sez he, ‘that’s out under the weather since they stopped the buildin’. ’Twouldn’t hold a cat.’

“Whether ’twas th’ effects of the night before, or the fright he got, or the two together, I



don't rightly know, but anyway the poor young gentleman was very sick.

“There was no foxhuntin' that day, for the hounds were no time at all drawin' for a fox, before Summers left a Tally Ho out of him at a deer that lept out of the shrubbery. Away wid the pack afther him an' there was never such a hunt seen before or since as they had that day. There wasn't a gentleman's place widin tin miles of the castle, but what that divil of a deer wint through. There was no person near 'em but Summers, so the people all thought they were his hounds, an' they were leppin' mad whin they see him ridin' through the middle of their flower gardens afther 'em. 'Twas small wonder too, afther the way he trated them all the night before.

“Won gentleman ran in for his gun an' was out in time to shoot the tail hound as he lept over the garden wall. He left the second barrel go at Summers, but he was out of shot. Poor Mr. Fair was so sick in himself afther the night before, that he couldn't cross the counthry after 'em, an' was only poundin' along the roads,

an' makin' every short cut he could on 'em. At last he kem to a gintleman's place wid a fine entrance-gate to it, an' there he sees Summers standin' alongside his horse roarin' laughin'.

“ ‘Where are me hounds ? ’ sez Fair.

“ ‘They’re inside there,’ sez Summers. ‘Don’t you hear ’em ? They’re killin’ the deer ayther in the flower garden, or the drawin’ room, I dunno which. Don’t go in for your life,’ sez he, ‘this place belongs to th’ ould woman I threw the lifebuoy to last night. The welcome you’d get might be warmer then you’d like.’

“ ‘Do you think I’ll stay here while they’re shootin’ the rest of me pack ? ’ sez Fair, gallopin’ in the drive. There was pluck in him afther all.

“ Whin he got to the house he found that the deer was in a little ornamental pond in the garden, wid all the pack yowlin’ round him an’ the masther of the house batin’ ’em back wid a garden rake. What flowers was in the garden was tore’ up. He took off his cap an’ wint up

to apologise the best way he could, whin to his surprise the gintleman took him by the hand an' sez, 'Mr. Summers an' his hounds are as welcome in my place, as the flowers of May. He's the best friend I ever had.'

"Fair had sinse enough not to claim the hounds, whin he saw the way the wind was blowin'.

" 'You couldn't have been at the party last night so,' sez he.

" 'I was,' said the gintleman, 'and 'tis of that very party I'm thinkin'. 'Twas me mother-in-law that got bogged in the moat. Whin Summers pulled her out she left her two shoes an' a set of teeth afther her. She was never a day sick in her life before, an' looked like livin' to be a hundred, but the docthor says that what between the timper she lost, an' the cowl'd she got she'll hardly ever rise out of the bed she's in.'

" 'Put the hounds away to me,' sez Fair. 'The noise they're makin' must be very disturbin' to the sick lady.'

" 'Don't mind 'em,' sez the gintleman. 'I



sint word up to her that they had her garden destroyed, an' now it's takin' me wife an' two more to hould her in the bed. She has the divil of a temper. Have a drink,' sez he.

“ ‘No thank you,’ sez Fair. ‘I think I ought to be gettin’ away. I’m a long way from home.’

“ ‘Tell Summers I’ll be very glad to see him at the funeral,’ sez the gintleman.

“ That was Tuesday. Th’ ould lady died that same night an’ was buried on Saturday. Summers attinded the funeral in the green coat an’ brass buttons that he wore huntin’, whenever he remembered to take off the jersey wid the anchor on it.

“ Now of all th’ inimies he had in the neighbourhood the Minister was the most vinemous, an’ ’twas small wonder afther what happened. Wasn’t he near bein’ the manes of lavin’ the poor man widout wife or child. The dear knows that’d be the lonesome state for a Minister to be in. Don’t they mostly have ’em in clutches like goslings.

“ The way it happened was like this. He

was huntin' won of his deer, an' of course as usual it med a round of all the gardins in the counthry. The Minister's gardin was the last it kem to. 'Twas bate out whin it got there, an' ran into a little glass house for safety. The damage of that wouldn't amount to a great dale, for a couple of pounds would pay for a lot of broken pots an' glass, but that wasn't all. Himself an' his wife was walkin' in the gardin, wid the twin babies that was all the family they had at that time. The Minister an' his coachman was afther trainin' a goat to draw a little carriage, an' 'twas inside in this the twins was, when Summers an' his hounds lepped over the hedge into the garden. There was no sign of the deer, but the goat did 'em as well. Don't believe any person that'll tell you that hounds would ate childer. They didn't take as much as won bite out of the twins, although whin the row was all over the mother herself couldn't tell won from th' other the way they were covered wid goat's blood. All the same that was the first commincement of the bad feelin' between Summers an' the Minister. They were always

quarrellin' from that day out. The day of th' ould lady's funeral was the first time Summers wint to church since the hounds ate the goat, an' I dunno was it to show respect for her he wint or to show his green coat to the Minister. 'Twas the Protestant cook above at the castle that toul't me the rest of the story the evenin' of the funeral. I was always very great wid cooks—no matter what religion they had. Of course 'twas I that druv the hearse. Accordin' to what the cook toul't me, they had some kind of a service afther the buryin' an' a sermon. Summers knew the Minister an' his ways well, an' that he had a habit of lanin' out over the rails of the pulpit when he'd be prachin'. It seems that 'twas a high pulpit an' the Minister was a big weighty man. Summers wint down to the church the night before an tuk a saw wid him. He cut the leg of the pulpit all but about a quarter of an inch. The minute the poor man laned out over the rail, down wid him pulpit an' all, head first into the middle of the mourners. He got the Bishop to move him to another parish afther that.



“Poor Mr. Fair was the nicest an’ most innocent young gintleman I ever had any dalin’ wid. When he kem an’ tuk the hounds, he had no exparience but he had a dale of money. He only kep’ ’em won year, but when he gev ’em up, he had a share of exparience an’ others had a share of his money. By talkin’ to him you’d surely think he was pure-blooded English, but he was no such a thing. His mother was an O’Donovan—I knew her well. ’Twasn’t from her he got ayther the money or th’ innocince. ’Twas always said that any two Donovans together—male or famale—would be aquil to drowndin’ an eel in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean. From all accounts the family character was only what was due to ’em. ’Twas surely a great misfortune for poor young Fair that his mother was dead before he tuk the hounds. I’d like to see the shape of the man that could stick her wid a horse, or any other daughter that ould Sam Donovan ever had. He’s livin’ still, an’ although he’s near ninety, I wouldn’t advise you to go card playin’ or horse dalin’ wid him. ’Twas English schools an’ school masthers that

was responsible for all the money young Fair gev away in horse dales. He'd learn more horse in any school in Ireland even if 'twas in Manooth itself. Whin he first kem over, his ould grandfather toul't him to come to him for advice whin-ever he was in trouble. He only wint to him once.

“ ‘I'd be much obliged to you, grandfather,’ sez he, ‘if you'd find me a good stable boy. I mane won that's strichtly sober, honest, respectable, an' a good horseman.’

“ ‘I will,’ sez Sam Donovan. ‘Come on,’ sez he. Wid that he called two min out of his garden, an' ordered won to get a spade an' th' other a shovel.

“ ‘What on earth do you want them for?’ sez the grandson.

“ ‘I'm goin' to get that good boy for you,’ sez he.

“ They walked about three miles with the two gardeners behind 'em before they kem to the grave yard. Ould Sam began pokin' round till he found the stone he wanted.

“ ‘Dig here,’ sez he.

“ ‘Do not,’ sez the grandson. ‘ ’Tis sacrilege,’ sez he.

“ ‘You weren’t long changin’ your mind,’ sez Sam. ‘Don’t you want that boy?’

“ ‘I do,’ sez the grandson.

“ ‘Then why don’t you lave ’em dig?’ sez Sam. ‘Th’ only good boy I ever knew is down there.’

“ ‘Twas a great pity the young man was so vexed about this. If he might go to his grandfather for more advice, ’tis likely he’d be master of the hounds here to-day, in place of bein’ snowballin’ an’ skeetin’ at what they call ‘winter sports’ in some foreign place.

“ ‘Twas all the falls he got from bad horses that put him agin huntin’. ’Twas seldom I saw the crature wid two top boots on him the same day, an’ if he had he’d surely have an arm in a sling. ’Twasn’t very long afther the Summersfield stag-hunt that he bruk a collar-bone. To give him nothin’ but his due, he was fond of huntin’, for whin he couldn’t ride a horse he’d have me drivin’ him afther the hounds. ’Twas the right shoulder that was hurted, so of course



he couldn't shave himself. His servant wouldn't undertake the job, an' there's no such thing as a regular barber in Bridgetown, so 'twasn't many days till he had a face on him that he was ashamed to come out wid. I was losin' money by it, so I set to work to find a barber for him. Th' only won I could think of was ould Mick Flavin that med a great part of his livin' by shavin' corpses. I dunno did your Honour ever hear that the rule is that 'tis wid the corpse's own razor he must get the last shave, an' that the man that shaves him gets the razor. Mick was shavin' the dead for the last thirty years, so 'twas unknown what razors he had. He couldn't sell 'em for 'tis well known that 'tisn't lucky to pay money for a dead man's razor.

“ I druv off an' brought Mick back wid me. A nice lookin' passenger he was, too, wid a beard on him nearly two feet long (I suppose there's some other superstition about shavin' yourself wid that kind of razor, but I never hard it) an' a suit of clothes that a rag an' bone man wouldn't giv' you a shugar stick for. Whin Fair seen the state of him he said he wouldn't

lave him lay a finger on him unless I sted in the room an' med meself responsible for all damage. So I did.

“The first thing Mick did was to run his thumb down th' edge of Fair's razors an' condimn 'em both.

“‘Won is like a saw,’ sez he, ‘an’ th’ other’s more like a file. I must go back home for my own,’ sez he, ‘but if Jerry drives me I won’t be long away. I have razors enough an’ more than enough to stock a shop, an’ your Honour can pick your choice out of ’em.’

“Whin I brought him back he spread out upwards of a dozen razors on the table an’ toulit Fair to plaze himself. There was mostly every kind of a razor you ever saw, among ’em. Large an’ small an’ black an’ white. The won Fair picked on was a black won that looked nearly new.

“‘I’m in dread you med a bad choice,’ sez Mick. ‘That’s poor Patsy Tobin, a young boy that never shaved more than two or three times. There’s no timper in it. Your Honour’s beard ’d make a saw of it. ’Twas from a pedlar he

bought it. Now look at this won, 'William Duggan.' There's great stuff in that. They don't make the like at all now. 'Tis often I cut me corns wid it an' shaved smood afther. 'Twas near a hundred years in the Duggan family, an' the son was sorry he didn't give the last shave himself so he could keep it, but he didn't think of it in time, an' of course it wouldn't be lucky to break the custom.'

"He had every won of the razors christened afther the corpses he got 'em from, an' 'twas about them he was talkin' all the time he was usin' 'William Duggan' on Fair. I suppose 'twas that med him turn as white as the lather that was on him an' a dale whiter, for Mick's hands wasn't too clane an' he rubbin' it on. All the same he couldn't fault the shave he got, for there was great edge on 'William Duggan.'

"Mick was so well plazed wid the half crown he got for that shave, that he put his hand into his trouser pocket an' pulled out a paper parcel.

"'I've a kind of curiosity here,' sez he, 'that's no use to me, as I don't suppose any person would lave me rub it to their jaw.'



“Wid that he opened the parcel an’ took out an ould rusty razor.

“ ‘This,’ sez he, ‘is th’ only razor I ever saw that cut a man’s throat an’ shaved him afther. ’Twas the blood that rusted it. I had to lave it on to plaze the Coroner.’

“Fair med him no answer, but ran out of the room. He tuk the train to Cork every mornin’ from that on to get shaved.”

## CHAPTER XIV

### JINNY JULY

“MIND yourself, your Honour. Ha, ha! didn’t I know well what she’d do when she’d hear the music. Take that, an’ that, an’ this. Ha, ha! me ould steeple-chaser. What mind you have for leppin’ ditches. Only for the good houl’t your Honour had of the rail you’d shurely be thrown off that time. There isn’t a time I ever passes that dancin’ board that she don’t show the very same element.

“Did your Honour have time to notice the foxey gerrul that was dancin’ the jig wid the soldier? You did. I wouldn’t doubt you, an’ the rowlin’ eye you have. Only for the hurry we’re in, I’d take you back to have another look at her. We won’t meet the like of her to-day agin. She’s the best dancer an’ the best-lookin’ gerrul in Munster this minute.

What's her name, is it? Begob, then, 'tis the quare name she has, an' 'twas a quare way she got it, 'Jinny July.' Th' ould man you saw sittin' in the donkey's car alongside the platform is th' only won that has any claim on her. 'Twas he rared her. Mostly every won in the village below there has a nickname, an' the name he goes by is 'Jim the grinner.' I can't say how did he ever get the name, for I never see a grin or a laff on the same man. A sour an' forsaken lookin' ould crature he always was. He keeps a tramp's lodgin' house in the Taypot (that's the name of a back lane in the village). The way he kem by Jinny was this. A ballad singer left the child behind her in the straw, that's the only furniture of the tramp's bedroom. Jim kep' her an' rared her, in place of sendin' her to the Union. There's some that say that it wasn't exactly out of charity he done it, but that he had the best right to her, seein' that the ballad singer was an ould customer of his. I don't believe a word of it. The gerrul is entirely too good lookin' and too sociable to be anything to him. Anyhow 'twas the best



day's work he ever done for himself. 'Twas at Cahirmee fair time it happened, an' as your Honour knows, that's the tinth of July. That's how she got the name of Jinny July, from Father Madden whin he christened her.

"She wasn't half the length of me whip before she was airnin' her own livin'. 'Tis often I saw her dancin' an' singin' on the counther of Shahan's public-house, an' every won in it givin' her sugar stick an' sups out of their pints or maybe pinnies. Good an' honest she'd take every pinny she'd get back to 'Jim the grinner.' Afther a while 'twould do your heart good to hear her tearin' jigs an' reels out of an ould accorjun that Jim took away from a travellin' musicianer that couldn't pay for his lodgin'. 'Twas aquilly the same thing wid a fiddle, an' I heard people sayin' that she'd surely make a hare of Miss O'Toole, the school-mistress that plays th' organ above at the chapel, if she had her own freedom at it for won week. Won that saw her to-day dancin' in her Sunday clothes, mightn't know her at all to-morrow if he met her in the 'Taypot.' She'll

be barefoot, an' maybe nothin' on her but an ould petticoat. 'Twas always a wonder to me how she gets so much dirt on her face between Sunday night an' Monday mornin'. There being no chimney in the house may have something to do wid it.

“ 'Tis Jim that owns the platform. He brings it out to the cross roads every Sunday an' Holy day an' charges every man a pinny a dance. The gerruls dances free. There's a dale of soldiers using it, they walks out the three miles from barracks, as it makes travellers of 'em an' then they can get drink. The most of 'em will take a dance wid Jinny on the way back. No other gerrul will plaze them. You'd often see her dancin' an' playin' at the same time, if there was no other person there wid music in 'em. You'd see the miseture runnin' down off of her in strames, but she'd never give up, as long as there was the price of a dance amongst 'em. To give 'The grinner' nothin' but his due, he allows no gladiathorin' or bad talk at his ball dancin'. The very first screech he'd hear out of a gerrul, he'd whip the plat-

form from under 'em an' put it in the donkey's car. That's the rason that nayther priest nor minister, gintle or simple could ever say anything about Jinny only won word bether than another. There's many a man would be glad to marry her long before now, but Jim keeps a very black houl't of the purse. 'Tis often I toul't Dan Shahan that he'd be makin' no mistake, if he took her widout a pinny. 'Tis she that would be the laughable an' affectionate gerrul behind any man's bar; there's many a man that would take a glass of brandy wid her, that would rather give a cup of pison to Dan's ould mother—the hungry ould mermaid, that never as much as axed me had I a mouth on me, as often as I druv custom up to her door.

“I was near forgettin' to tell you about the time that the ballad singer kem back an' tried to claim Jinny. She spread the report that she was a lord's daughter. Jinny would have nothin' to say to her, an' give herself up to Father Madden for safety. When the priest saw the cut of the woman, he sez to her, ‘That lord, whoever he was, must surely be blind.’



“ ‘Wouldn’t blind drunk do?’ sez she. Afther that the priest got her hunted out of the village, an’ she was never seen from that day to this.

“ ‘Jim had like to die a short time ago. He got some kind of a sudden blast in the middle of the night, whin they could get no one to go for Dr. Soakage. Only for an’ ould beggar woman called ‘Mary the sweep,’ that was lodgin’ wid him the same night, he’d surely be dead when the doctor kem in the mornin’.

“ ‘You’re very bad,’ sez the doctor.

“ ‘I was a dale worse,’ sez Jim. ‘Only for what “Mary the sweep” done for me, I’d never put the night over me.’

“ ‘What did she do?’ sez the doctor.

“ ‘She gev me the same cure that they gives to collicy horses,’ sez Jim. ‘Salt, an’ soot, an’ whisky, an’ whin I couldn’t keep that down, she spint the rest of the night hatin’ plates to the fire an’ clappin’ ’em up to me stomach.’

“ ‘The doctor gev Mary great credit for what she did. ‘I couldn’t do much bether myself,’ sez he. There must be some great medicine in

soot, for I always noticed that ould women that do be sittin' in the chimney corner till their eyes do be like two burnt holes in a blanket, hardly ever dies a natural death. Wid the care people are takin' of 'em now since they got the pinsion, I don't suppose they'll ever die. There's an ould aunt of me own that's like that. She's nearly up to a hundred years of age, an' she's tryin' to die these last twenty years, so much so that the last time they called Father Mac to her he wouldn't come near her. 'I kem so often,' sez he, 'that there isn't an inch of her but I have anointed.'

"Dan Shahan an' his ould mother are atin' their nails now, wid vexation that they didn't take Jinny whin they had the chance. 'Tisn't everybody she'd marry now, nor indeed she needn't, since she got 'Mary the sweep's' money. Nobody rightly knows how much of it there was, but whatever was there 'tis Jinny got it. 'Twas in Jim's house that Mary died. She was a long time sick, an' Jinny cared her an' nussed her in spite of Jim, who wanted to send her to the Union. Ould Mary was a beggar

an' the breed of a beggar, for her mother was won before her. The nearest she ever went to Mass was to be standin' outside the chapel gate, lookin' for charity whin the congregation was comin' out. All the same when she felt the death comin' on her she sent for the priest. 'Twas against Jim's will that Jinny spint three pounds on the funeral, but she promised Mary that she should have a hearse, an' she wouldn't break her word. 'Twas I that druv it, an' 'twas then that 'Jim the grinner' toult me all about it. I gev him a lift back from the graveyard on top of the hearse designedly, to hear the story. When the priest kem to Mary, the first question she axed him was, 'How soon will I die?' 'I don't know,' sez he, 'but it won't be long.'

“‘Stay wid me,’ sez she, ‘an’ I’ll pay you well for it. I’m carryin’ money on me,’ sez she, ‘that me mother carried before me. I’ll give you five pounds, but you must promise that every other pinny of it will go to “Jinny July” —she’s the only won that ever kissed me.’ The priest gev the promise, an’ then, sez he, ‘Where’s the money?’



“ ‘I’m carryin’ it all me life,’ sez Mary, ‘ an’ I won’t part wid it while there’s breath in me, so you mustn’t touch it till I’m dead. ’Tis in a tin box that a tinker med for me mother, when tinkers knew how to do good work. Me mother had the same hump on her back that I have. That hump is the box.’ Whin Mary was dead an’ the priest opened the box, Jim sez there was gold money in it dated more than a hundred years ago. What she said about her mother must be true. I believe there was a dale of rubbish in it as well as money, but Jim sez he saw notes as well as gold an’ silver. The priest never told him how much was there, an’ put Jinny under a promise to hould her tongue. ’Tis likely ’twill take a fat share of it to relase ‘Mary the sweep’ an’ her mother from purgatory, for ’tis little prayers they ever said for themselves.

“ Keepin’ a tramp’s lodgin’-house might seem to your Honour a poor way to make a livin’. All the same there do be money med at it. ’Tis praties an’ bread all the beggars collects. Many a woman that wouldn’t give a hapinny in money

will give three or four pince worth of praties, or a big cut of bread to git rid of won of 'em. 'Tis wid this the tramps pays for their lodgin'. All lodgin'-house keepers feeds pigs. 'Jim the grinner' often has five or six fat at the same time. Hardly any of the farmers an' poor people in backward places ever see a newspaper, an', indeed, they needn't ayther, as long as tramps are as plintiful as they are. You wouldn't believe how quick news travels through the country wid 'em. They have their own regular districts, an' whin two of 'em will meet you'll always see 'em swappin' news wid won another. They ginerally knows a day before anybody dies, an' will be there when he draws the last breath, so as to be paid for keening. This custom is dyin' out every place, except in the mountains. 'Tis a great pity, for 'twould make your heart turn inside you to hear 'em."

## CHAPTER XV

### GLEESON'S BUSH

“WHY did I raise me hat an’ bless meself? Because me father did it before me in the same place. I never passes that white-thorn bush above there in the field widout sayin’ a prayer for a man that never did the like for himself an’ that got more curses than blessin’s while he was livin’. Pether Gleeson was his name, an’ ’tis under that bush he’s buried. He left a dale of money, an’ indeed ’tis in spite of him he left it, he’d surely take it wid him if he could, for he med it hard an’ ’tis little satisfaction he ever got out of it, only what pleasure he got out of countin’ it. He put no depindence on ayther priests or ministers, an’ I don’t believe God or the divil troubled him much while he was livin’ whatever they may be doin’ now. ’Tis by Gombeenin he med his money durin’ the bad times, an’ ’tis many a



poor man he sould up when they couldn't meet their debts, but 't isn't for me to be talkin' bad of him afther what he did for me father.

“Nayther priest nor minister kem near him while he was sick, altho' he was bether than twelve months dyin', so he put it in his will that 'twas under that bush he should be buried, an' he left twenty pounds to Thady Brien, that was a blacksmith at the cross below in them times, on th' understanding that he'd hit him three strokes of a sledge hammer on the head before he was put in the coffin. It seems that he was greatly in dread of bein' buried alive. He left a hundred pounds to ould Dawson the solicitor—the father of the man that's there now—on the condition that he'd see this carried out. Dawson didn't like to be a witness to any such butchery, but of course he didn't want to forfeit the money, so he toul't Thady that all he need do was to touch the corpse wid the hammer.

“‘No,’ said Thade, ‘I'll carry out th' instructions. He had good rason for lavin' 'em to me. 'Tis well he knew that I'd soften his head while he was livin' if I got the chance. There

needn't be many nails druv in the coffin to hould him down afther I'm done wid him.'

"A brother of Thade's was transported many years before that for burnin' a haggart of corn belongin' to Pether Gleeson, so 'twas no wonder he had it in for him.

"'Twas found out afther that there was some flaw in the will an' in th' end all the money [an' property wint to a spree-boy of a nephew that ould Pether never left a pinny to, tho' he was the next heir to it. He began scatterin' it from the very first, an' whin ould Dawson kem to give him good advice th' answer he got was, 'There is so much money there that if I kem at won end of it an' the divil at the other, an' if he put a rogue of an attorney like you in the middle, we couldn't spind it.'

"'Twasn't many years till 'twas all gone an' he died a pauper. However 'twas managed I don't know, but the Dawsons are livin' there ever since.

"Like many another in the bad times, me poor father an' mother had a hard struggle to

rare a heavy family on a small spot of ground when the disease kem on the praties, an' to make matters worse they had bad neighbours in the Doolans that was livin' alongside of 'em in the same yard. There was never a Court day but what there'd be law between 'em. If it wasn't the trespass of a goat or a pig, 'twould be an assault an' bathery between the women. The bounds fince between the two plots was bad, an' they'd never jine wid won another to mind it. The finishin' touch kem when Doolan's cow lepped the ditch an' ate what clothes me mother was afther washin'. I remember it well, for I was kept in bed the same day while me shirt was dryin'. 'Twas a little shift belongin' to one of me sisters I was wearin' for some time afther. Of coorse there was more law about this, an' whin Dawson the solicitor wouldn't take up the case widout being ped ready money, me father wint an' borrowed tin pounds from Pether Gleeson. 'Twas the greatest law suit that was ever known in these parts, for the Doolans had a cross case agin me mother for the loss of the cow, that swallowed a darnin' needle that was stuck in a



stockin'. They swore 'twas a trap she set an' baited by puttin' a raw pratie in the stockin', altho' the whole worruld knows that you could never darn the heel widout puttin' somethin' hard inside it, and 'tis a pratie that is ever an' always used up to the present day. Me mother won the case, but only got a farthin' damages, so the debt to Pether Gleeson was over us all through. 'Twasn't very long after this till an ould woman of the Doolans died. She was no loss, so, as usual in a case of the kind, they had a dale of joviality at the wake. The young people was card-playin' an' th' ould wons sittin' around the fire tellin' stories to won another about what a grand woman the corpse was in her day. The coffin was on the kitchen table, wid candles burnin' around it the same as the custom always is. Ould Doolan had the hair riz on their heads tellin' 'em about how 'Petticoat loose,' the ghost, kilt a man below at the bridge, where your Honour may see the cross marked on the wall to this day, when all of a sudden there was a screechin' an' flutherin' in the chimney an' about a barrow of sut an' a live gander fell down into

the middle of the fire. The party got blocked in the door tryin' to get out, an' in the gineral scrimmage the table an' coffin was turned upside down.

“The gander med his escape out the door afther the crowd, an' 'twas more than an hour before any of 'em had the courage to come back. Whin they did, there was goose's feathers enough about the house to show 'em what happened. The blame was put on us in a minute, an' the whole party ran over to break in our door an' have me father's blood. He was prepared for 'em, an' the first won of the Doolans that bruk in got a clout of a spade that med a cripple of him till his dyin' day. They were about to put a light to the thatch over our heads when the Peelers that happened to be on patrol kem in. Me father was arrested whin the doctor said he had no hopes of Mike Doolan's life, and two police was left in charge of the house to keep the faction from murderin' me mother. She was a knowin' woman, an' the first thing she did was to go to Pether Gleeson for help.

“‘Jerry's took,' sez she, ‘an if he's trans-

ported you may whistle for your tin pounds, for there's two year's rint owin' to the landlord, an' what we have won't half cover that.'

"When Pether heard the whole story he studied over it for a while an' thin said he—

"'A poor man like me can't afford to lose so much money, so I won't let him be transported this time. I'll swap ganders wid you.'

"'If you do,' sez me mother, 'I must give you the pot for boot, for I put mine boilin' in it before I left home. 'Tisn't the way I'd keep him for a witness agin us an' the two wings burnt off him.'

"'You're a smart woman,' sez Pether, 'but how are you goin' to account for not havin' him to show? There's plinty to swear that you had him yesterday.'

"'That's what brought me up to you,' sez she. ''Tis your gander I want to take his place.'

"'I'll do bether than that for you,' sez Pether. 'Don't you know that I bate young Dinny Doolan th' other day for throwin' stones at the goslings because the gander bit him. His mother swore she'd have satisfaction out of me.'



Go you out now an' ketch the gander an' burn the wings off him, an' I'll go an' tell the police about th' outrage that was committed on me. If that don't clear Jerry there's no use in havin' a good witness. I'd like to hear the Judge cross-questionin' that same gander.'

"Whin the case kem on Pether's gander cleared me father, and the Doolans was all bound over to the pace for breakin' in the door. That's the rason I takes off me hat whenever I passes Gleeson bush, an' if I knew where the gander was buried I'd do the very same for him.

"There is terrible vinom in some people. You'd hardly believe me if I toult you what a spite the Doolans have agin us to this very day. There isn't a time we ever had a wake in the family since that night but what we must keep a guard around the house for fear of what they might do to the corpse.

"Did we throw the gander down the chimney? Certainly to be sure we did, and why wouldn't we? 'Twas me mother—the heavens be her bed—that thought of it, but she niver intinded to interfere wid the coffin, an' was in

dread of her life to go outside the door afther dark for years afther that, for fear she'd meet ould Moll Doolan's ghost. I don't believe in the like at all meself, an', indeed, if any ghost ever got rason to walk it should be ould Pether Gleeson's, an' I never hard that there was as much as a stir out of him. The way his nephew, Johnnie Purdon, set about scatterin' the money, that it tuk a lifetime to collect, would surely rise him if the like was possible at all. 'Twasn't be the sweat of his brow he med it, but be the sweat of all the damn fools that kem to borrow from him, an' that's the way most fortunes is med. I was always set agin sweatin' meself, for I know 'tis others would get the binifit of it. That's the rason I tuk to drivin'. You'd be a long time sittin' on the side of a car before your shirt would stick to your back, onless 'twas from the dint of rain runnin' down the back of your neck, an' there's only won cure for that. I thought your Honour would surely ax me what that was, an' I had me mind med up to say whisky. It looks like turnin' to rain, too, an' as th' ould people used to say, 'prevention is bether

than cure.' Good luck to you! A naggin' of that is bether than twice as much that would be handed to you over a counther. As soon as Johnnie Purdon got the money he started off for Dublin, an' put in the biggest spree of his life. Nobody hard a word from him for three months, unless it might be ould Dawson, who had the handlin' of his business, an' he was never much of a talker. People were gettin' tired of wonderin' what had become of him, when one fine day he druv up to the door wid, what me father always said, was the finest lookin' woman he ever saw in his life. She was six foot high, wid yalla hair an' a red face, that me father said a man 'd never be tired lookin' at. Purdon was a small man, an' very drunk the same day, so she just picked him up in her arms, an' carried him into the house. It seems she was a play actress, an' people at the first thought she was married to him, but as she always called herself Miss Ellen Daly, I suppose she knew her own business best. For some time afther that 'twas hard to tell day from night in that house. The windy shutters wouldn't be opened sometimes for a week at a



stretch. The full of the house, an' more than the full of it, of people like herself followed her down from Dublin, an' they were never done dancin' an' divilment of won kind or another. Purdon was mad whin he was drunk, an' foolish whin he was sober, so she had the management of everything in her own hands. There was nobody to take poor Johnnie Purdon's part, for ould Dawson was lindin' him money, an' takin' mortgages on everything he had. I suppose if the crature lived another year th' ould blood-sucker 'd turn him out of the house, an' step into it himself. The way things turned out in the latter end he never put his foot over the threshold, glory be to God for that same.

“Ould Dawson had a son that he didn't spake to for tin years before this. A rale smart man an' a K.C.—he died a judge afther—wid a great practice in murder cases an' such like. Whin poor Johnnie Purdon was found dead won mornin' in such a suspicious state that they had to hould an inquest on him 'tis to young Dawson that Ellen Daly wint for help, an' whin Purdon's sisther took the law of her for forgin' the will

that left all the property to her he med a bargain that she should marry him if he got her off. He never had to work so hard before, but he saved her and got herself an' the property. A bad bargain he med that same day, for he had to go every step of the way to Rome, an' 'tis unknown what money he ped the Pope before he got divorced from her. He married secondly agin, an' 'tis a grandson of his that's living there now. By the way he's shapin' 'tis likely he'll go the same road that Johnnie Purdon wint. There's a thirst goin' wid that same property for ginerations. Ould Pether Gleeson was th' only won that it took no effect on, an' 'tis in a dry place he's buried under that bush."

## CHAPTER XVI

### THE CUBBY HOUSE

“THERE’S times when the truth don’t do half the harm you might think it would, indeed I’d nearly say it might do better for you than any other thing you could lay your tongue to in a hurry. There’s many different kinds of truth. There’s—‘the truth, the whole truth, an’ nothing but the truth, kiss the Book,’—an’ that’s all bloody lies. Then there’s the truth they’d get out of you when you’re drunk, that’s the most desateful truth of all, for it’s double more than the truth an’ so would put any man astray. Then there’s the truth that might slip from you when you were talking to a gerrul and not minding yourself; only for that kind of truth ’t isn’t here I’d be to-day, drivin’ your Honour, but rottin’ in the grave wid two bullets thro’ me.

“ ’Twas long ago in the bad times when I



used to be driving the Peelers here an' there, mostly by night, and consequently was onder a heavy boycott, tho' 'twas little I cared for that same, for 'twas in the Barracks I was sleepin' an' atin', an' no publican would dar refuse me for a drink, whin the Peelers would be to the fore. 'Twas well known I was no scholar, but they knew I could read pictures, so there was no morning but I'd get a paper wid a gun an' a coffin an' maybe meself stretched dead in it. Well, won day the news kem that there was a new outrage in a place to the wesht of us ('tis as well not to be mintioning names, long ago as it is). 'Twas the way they had med a bonfire wid two live goats an' a donkey belongin' to an emergency man, be pouring paraffin oil over the cratures. Of coorse the divilment was over an' done before word came to the Peelers, but all the same up an' away wid us late in the evenin'. 'Twas dark whin we got there, but as usual they comminced shmellin' the place where the ile was spilt, and thin wint on to axing for information from the very lads that did the job. While they were

takin' notes an' drawin' pictures of the burnt bones of the victims, meself was in the public-house takin' a small sup of drink an' talkin' to the gerrul behind the bar. Now there was two roads for me to go home by, the bog-road and the castle-road; the bog-road was the longest, but the liveliest, an' as I had four Peelers on the car 'twas that way I was going. Prisintly—'What way are you goin' home, Jerry?' says the gerrul to me.

"Widout thinkin' what I was sayin'—'The bog-road,' sez I.

"She never said a word, but an ould woman that was sittin' at the fire riz up an' walked out. Of coorse if I'd thought of meself, while manin' to go be the bog, I'd have toul't her be the castle. Bye an' bye I harnessed up the mare and druv away home be the bog-road and was back into the Barracks be about two o'clock in the mornin'. Now there was to be a fair that mornin' in Boherboy, an' a pig-jobber from Drum was drivin' on a car wid a grey horse the same as we had. There was four on the car and a boy on the drivin' sate. They wint be the castle-

road. Just as they were walkin' up the hill to the castle, there was shots kem from the two sides of the road and the driver was kilt dead. Whin the news kem in, the first thing I said to meself was—if I toult that divil of a gerrul the lie she thought I toult her, 'tis dead I'd be now, in place of the innocent poor crature that's gone. So that's why I say that many a time the truth is the most desateful thing you could tell a person.

“ Well, that wasn't the finish of it nayther, for, of coorse, I had to drive the Peelers to that outrage too, and not once nor twice, but every day for nearly a week. At the inquist the doctor got the two bullets out of the poor corpse an' they proved to be belonging to some quare kind of a pistol or gun that wasn't common at all in this country but very plintiful in America. There was great searching high an' low for them guns an' great rewards offered, but all for no use.

“ The last day we druv out there we met the poor boy's funeral. The finest an' the longest funeral I ever saw. If he was one of the Manchester Martyrs he couldn't have more respect



ped him. There was no person but meself an' them that did it, rightly knew how he came to be kilt. Well, of coorse, whin we met the funeral we turned back wid it and followed on to the graveyard. The Peelers all the time axing for information about the guns an' getting no satisfaction. 'Twas only the other day I was toul't that the two guns was under the poor corpse in the coffin, an' was buried wid it. They thought they wern't lucky an' they wouldn't use 'em any more. Wasn't it a safe place they put 'em?

“'Tis many a quare thing you'd see at funerals, an' what I always say is that a body'd never known a man rightly till he'd be after sittin' up wid him at a wake before the will was read. I was at ould Mick Sullivan's wake, a man that was known to have two thousand pounds in the bank, besides what he was thought to have hid about the house in holes an' cran-nies. There was relations there from parts of Kerry, an' as far wesht as Skibbereen that never were in the house before, an' that ould Mick didn't spake to for forty years before that.

There they were sittin' about the corpse, begrudging won another a pinch of snuff or a sup of whisky, an' watchin' every stir of hand or foot. If won should get up and walk out, two or three more would follow him for fear he'd find anything. An' after all, the divil a taste of good it did any of 'em.

“I always gave Father White great praise for the way he tricked 'em. You must know that ould Mick had a daughter Nora, the best gerrul that was in three parishes, an' a fine lookin' gerrul too, before that ould nagro of a father of hers had the flesh pealed off of her bones wid work, milkin' cows an' feedin' calves an' pigs, whin childer of her own age were at the Nun's school learnin' to play the pianny an' to cover the week's dirt wid silk on Sunday. This wint on till poor Nora was near thirty, an' would have gone on till he died, if she stayed wid him, for he'd never part wid a penny of a fortune nor take a man into his house and farm. Now there was a servant boy across the road at Toole's, Tom Deasy, a fine, dacint, good-lookin' young man, that everybody had a wish for, an'

Nora an' himself were very great together for a long time, but knew well 'twas no use for 'em to talk of marriage while ould Mick was livin'. At last won day Father White walked into Mick an', sez he, 'Nora an' Tom Deasy have to be married.'

" 'Marry that pauper!' sez ould Mick. 'I'll see her dead first.'

" 'Don't I tell you they must be married,' sez Father White. 'The gerrul's in trouble,' sez he.

" 'Begob, there's no great miracle in that,' sez Mick, 'the like might happen the cat.'

" Wid that Father White turned at him an' threatened him wid all sorts both in this world an' the next. But he might as well be talkin' to a Prodestant for all the good it did.

" 'Won good thing,' said he at last, 'you can't take your money wid you, an' if you did 'twould melt.'

" He married Nora and Tom the same evening, an' they went to America the next day. Now Father White always had a great wish for poor Nora, in spite of what happened, an' used to write to her in America, so when he saw that



ould Mick was on his last legs he sent her money to bring herself an' her husband home. They arrived at Queenstown, an' the full of a boat of childer wid 'em, the very day he died, an' 'twas nine o'clock that night when themselves an' Father White walked into the wake wid a 'God save all here.' The Kerry relations were on for makin' a row till the priest pulled the will out of his pocket, an', sez he, "'Twas I drew it, but even if 'tis drawn wrong 'twill do ye no good, for Nora's the next of kin.'

"I druv the hearse the next day, an' a poor disrespectable funeral it was for a strong farmer like ould Mick. All the Kerry relations wint off wid themselves as soon as the last sup of whisky was drunk at the wake. Only for the curiosity of the neighbours that wanted to see what like Nora was, after her tin years in America, I don't think there would have been enough men to take the coffin out of the hearse.

"Poor Nora was glad to be back home, but 'twas a long time before Tom settled down to the farm work, an' they had to keep a servant boy to do the most part of it.

“ ‘ ‘Tis conductin’ a tram he was in New York,’ said she, ‘ an’ ’tis the way he misses the joultin’, an’ the bell, an’ the rush of noise, but wid the help of God he’ll forget it afther a while. ’Tis many the night I spint, drammin’ of the cows, an’ the little hins an’ geese, whin I never thought to see ’em agin, but God is good, so He is.’

“ Everything wint on well, for Nora took a houl’t an’ worked as hard as ever she did in her father’s time, an’ there was only two things troublin’ ’em, won was, that whin they looked into ould Mick’s business they found that there was the most part of a thousand pounds missing, an’ the other thing was, that the eldest little boy—him that caused all the trouble—wasn’t quite right in himself. You couldn’t call him a fool, but he was simple in his ways, an’ never wint wid th’ other childer, but med little plays for himself. If anything vexed him he was apt to get a kind of a fallin’ sickness, so he got his own way in everything, an’ of coorse Nora thought more of him than all the rest. I wonder did your Honour ever see little gerruls playin’ a

game they call 'Cubby House'? You'd never see boys playin' it. 'Tis the way they makes a little house for themselves out by the side of a ditch, an' picks up bits of ould chany an' broken glass, or anything bright an' shiny like that, to make a dresser, an' they do be playin' house-keepin'. Well, that was th' only game poor little Jackeen ever played, an' he'd surely fall into fits if anybody meddled wid his chaneys, so Nora never let th' other childer meddle wid 'em. Tom Deasy always said 'twas the way the Kerry relations found the money an' whipt it away wid 'em, but Nora never agreed wid that.

" 'Wasn't I livin' in this house all me life,' said she, 'whin I knew me father had money hid in it, an' didn't I often search for it? 'Tis hard to say that them that was here but the won night, an' all watchin' won another, could find what I was years lookin' for.'

"Time wint on this way till at last won day in the summer whin all the rest of the childer was at school an' Nora was busy workin' at something or another in the kitchen, little



Jackeen comes in to her an' begins to pull at her dress, an' try to coax her to come out an' see his 'Cubby House.'

" 'You must come out,' sez he, 'an' see all the grand new chanies I have. They're grander than what you have on your own dresser.' He kept on that way at her, till at length an' at last she took him by the hand an' went out wid him. When she looked into the 'Cubby House' what did she see but sovereigns an' half-crowns an' every other kind of silver money stuck up agin the side of the ditch where the broken chanies used to be.

" 'Aren't them grand chanies?' sez Jackeen. 'Don't put a hand near 'em,' sez he, 'nor don't show 'em to th' other childer, or I'll be sick, an' what 'd you do then?'

" Well, poor Nora was in a great state about it. She knew well he was afther findin' ould Mick's money, but for twice the money she wouldn't throw him into fits by takin' it from him, an' nothin' she could say or do would make the poor child show her where he got it.

" She was in dread to tell his father for fear

he'd be rough wid the crature, an' she didn't know what to do at all, at all. She kep' on coaxin' him till th' other childer kem home from school, an' then for fear they'd see the money she gev 'em their supper an' put the whole lot of 'em to bed. Then she sat down to think it over. She knew very well the money was safe where it was, for no person ever went near Jackeen's 'Cubby House,' but what was troubling her was to find out where he got the money, for she knew there must be more there.

“At last she thought of a plan. She went out and took three or four pieces out of every row on the little dresser, an' never said a word about it to a livin' soul. The first thing that Jackeen did in the mornin' as usual, was to run out to his 'Cubby House.' Nora meant to follow him, but the husband kept her so busy gettin' his breakfast that she couldn't go. She was all the time expectin' to hear a screech out of Jackeen when he'd miss the money, but there wasn't a word out of him. As soon as ever she got the husband off her hands, out she goes an' there she finds Jackeen playin' away wid his

‘Cubby House,’ an’ his little dresser full up of money agin, besides about twenty pounds that he was layin’ out on a little table for plates. She held playin’ with him there the most of the day tryin’ to find out where he got the grand chanies from, but ’twas no use, he’d never tell her a word about it. All she could do was to keep on stalin’ the money from him little by little every night. No matter how close a watch she’d keep on him she could never find him takin’ the fresh money out of ould Mick’s store, but if she kept away from him he always filled up the gaps in his dresser. This went on till she had four hundred pounds collected, an’ then a day kem when ’twas broken chanies was put in the places where she took the money from, an’ in another while the ‘Cubby House’ was back like it used to be, an’ then she knew she had all the money. ’Twasn’t very long afther that till poor little Jackeen got the faver an’ died, an’ from that day to this no person ever knew where he found ould Mick’s money. Tom Deasy levelled the ditch of the orchard an’ didn’t lave a stone about the place without searchin’, but



there was never as much as a pinny piece found, only what the poor simple child got. Father White always said that 'twas surely the will of God that the poor child that was the first cause of all the trouble should find the money, an' he'd never believe that there was any more there at all, but many people are of the opinion that there's more than as much agin hid somewhere about the place still.

“I dunno what to say meself, but I do know that as a gineral thing, if you'd divide any person's supposed fortune be two, you'd be above the mark.”

## CHAPTER XVII

### PARADISE

“THAT’S Paradise. I dunno who christened it. Whoever it was he wint to ayther Hell or Paradise long before I was born. The first person I remember to be livin’ there was ould Tom Considine. I’d nearly say he was the first passenger I ever druv. If he wasn’t he was won of ’em. He was gettin’ to be an ould man the first time I ever see him. ’Tis a pity I didn’t know him in his young days, for by all accounts he had great elemint in him. ’Tis on whisky he was livin’ entirely at that time, but I’d nearly say that would never put him out of Paradise if he might lave the bagpipes alone. ’Twas them that druv him mad an ’twas in th’ asylum he died. He was always able to play th’ Irish pipes an’ was very fond of ’em, an’ I don’t suppose they’d ever injure him only for a Scotchman named Frazer that was livin’ in

that house over there on the hill. He used to play the Scotch pipes an' the two of 'em was ever an' always arguin' about which had the best music in 'em. Frazer used to say that there could be no right music squeezed out of a bellus, an' ould Tom used to answer him back be sayin' that if there ever was a chune in Frazer's bags he had it drowned wid all the spittle he put into it. That's the way they'd have it, hammer an' tongs, drinkin' an' pipin' till nayther won of 'em would know Scotch from Irish nor 'Patrick's day in the morning' from 'The Campbells are coming.'

"At length an' at last ould Tom proved himself the toughest of the two, for the whisky an' the music between 'em kilt Frazer. He left his pipes to ould Tom in his will. Them an' about a horse-load of empty bottles was all he had to lave. 'Twas then Tom said that he'd settle th' argument once for all.

"'I'll learn to play the Scotch pipes,' sez he, 'or bust meself. Frazer had no music in him an' I don't think he ever blew what was in 'em, out of 'em.'



“I can’t say how long was he learnin’ ’em before the day that I druv th’ ould Lord—the grandfather of the present won—up to Paradise to buy a big grey horse that ould Tom had. Anyhow, when we druv up to the door, there he was, sated on the window-sill, blowin’ the Scotch pipes an’ he havin’ the Irish wons strapped round his waist. He ped no attention in the woruld to us, but in a minute or two he dropped the Scotch an’ started bellusin’ away at the Irish.

“ ‘Which of the two do you like best?’ sez he to the Lord. ‘I can’t make up me own mind. Won thing I have agin the Scotch is that you can’t be talkin’ an’ playin’ together. Wid th’ Irish I can be singin’ this way if I like the chune.’

“Wid that he began to sing, ‘The priest in his boots.’ He was lavin’ every roar out of him like a young bull an’ when ’twas all tangled up wid the bagpipes believe me ’twas a noise that would frighten you.

“ ‘The man must be mad,’ sez his Lordship.

“ ‘Not entirely, me Lord,’ sez I. ‘You’ll

maybe find him sinsible enough when you come to buyin' the horse.'

" 'I kem to see your grey horse, Mr. Considine,' sez his Lordship. 'I'm in a hurry,' sez he.

" 'You're a damn fine man, whoever you are,' sez Tom. 'Nearly as fine a man as me-self.' (Ould Tom was six foot six in his stockin's.) 'Drive round to the yard, Jerry,' sez he, 'an' tell em' to bring out the horse.'

" So I did.

" Whin I kem back he was givin' his Lordship his choice of the two pipes, but he said he must play won or other of 'em or else fight him a jool wid any wapon he liked to mintion.

" I thought his Lordship was the most active big man I ever see, the way he lepped on to the car, an' I was coughin' for half a mile of the road afther the punch he gev' me in the back when he said—

" 'Drive on an' drive like Hell.'

" He never saw the grey horse at all.

" The next people that kem to Paradise was a different class entirely. The man began life

as a police constable in Bridgetown, an' aftherwards got into the force in Liverpool, where he married a woman wid a dale of money. She was the widda of a man that kep a tripe an' sausage shop. I'm toul't she was feedin' him up for years before the first husband died. There must be great nourishment in tripe, for he was a thin man whin I knew him in Bridgetown, an' he had a head of mate on him as big as a thirty-shillin' pot whin he kem back wid the widda.

“His name was Geran, but he was bether known by a nickname that he got shortly afther settlin' down here. He was a very big man wid very big ways about him. He'd sooner walk in the middle of the street than on the side-walk, an' the vests he used to wear would dazzle you. He bought a big foxey horse an' tuk to huntin'. The first day he kem out in a red coat, a blue scarf an' a yalla vest, won of the lads christened him 'Geran-go-Bragh,' an' he was never known by any other name till he died. The wife's name was Chick before he married her, an' she had won daughter be the



first husband, a nice little gerrul that you'd never connect wid tripes unless you were toul't about it.

“ ‘Geran-go-Bragh ’ an’ the wife didn’t get on any too well afther a while. She didn’t approve of the huntin’ but he wouldn’t give it up. Won day afther a great row she said she’d put a sudden stop to it so she got a pair of scissors an’ med ribbons of the red coat an’ put the top boots into the kitchen fire. People said she wore the breeches herself. ’Tis in his Sunday clothes he was obliged to hunt that day an’ he got nayther pride nor comfort out of the trousers. That evenin’ he consulted wid Miss Chick the step-daughter. ‘Th’ only chance you have of gettin’ to the top of the tree,’ sez he, ‘is to ride there. If you kem out huntin’ ’tis unknown what grand acquaintances you might make. Look at me that’s only a few days goin’ out. I’m takin’ me hat off to her Ladyship every time I pass her, an’ I had a chance of talkin’ to her to-day whin she dropped her whip only I was ashamed of them damn trousers.’

“ Miss Chick had a share of money of her own so she hadn't to consult her mother before herself, an' 'Geran-go-Bragh' bought a horse and side-saddle. She was a very sinsible gerrul, so she practised ridin' for some time before showin' herself in the huntin' field an' was well able to throw leps.

“ ‘ How do you like huntin', miss ? ’ sez won of the gintlemen that med her acquaintance.

“ ‘ ‘Tis lovely,’ sez she, closin' her two eyes. ‘ I feel like a bird flyin' through th' air whin the horse is leppin'.’

“ That's how she kem to be called ‘ The Bird of Paradise ’ from that out.

“ Of course Miss Chick couldn't be left out huntin' by herself so her mother had to get a new coat for ‘ Geran-go-Bragh ’ an' he's huntin' ever since.

“ They keeps a car of their own an' hardly ever gives me a job. Th' only way I kem to know anything about 'em was through a butler they had for a short time, an' a very short time at that; only two days. It seems that Miss Chick was educated at a very genteel boardin'

school where they taught her all about high society, so whin her mother talked about givin' a big dinner-party she knew they should have a butler. 'Tis a parlourmaid they were keepin' up till then. I got orders to meet the half-past four train won day an' to bring down a butler to 'em that was comin' from Cork. So I did. A very respectable lookin' man he was too. I druv him down an' of course 'twas at the back door I pulled up. He walked straight into the kitchen, but he wasn't two minutes inside whin himself an' the cat kem flyin' out to me together an' a tay-cup was bruk agin the jamb of the door just behind 'em. He lepped up on the car to me an'—'Drive me back to the station,' sez he. So I did.

“ ‘What happened to you ?’ sez I.

“ ‘ ’Twas a mistake I med,’ sez he. ‘ Whin I walked in the first thing I see was a woman in her hair.’

“ ‘What do you mane ?’ sez I.

“ ‘She was in her hair,’ sez he agin, ‘sated on a chair wid her back to the fire an’ it all hangin’ about her shoulders only won piece



about the size of a horse's tail that was hangin' on the plate-warmer over the range. I thought she was the cook so I walked up to her an' cot her be the hand an' comminced shakin' it. She snatched it away from me an' hit me a clout on the jaw.'

" 'Who are you ? ' sez she.

" 'I'm the new butler,' sez I.

" 'Lave me house this minute,' sez she, grabbin' a cup of tay that was on the table an' aimin' it at me.

" 'Twas then that I saw that 'twas the mistress, an' that she was hatin' her hair to the fire, after puttin' a new coat of dye on it.'

" That butler wint back to wherever he kem from, an' I got orders to meet the next train agin to bring down another. So I did. The minute I set eyes on him I knew he was an ould waiter from the foundered way he was walkin'.

" 'Do you want to keep this job ? ' sez I to him.

" 'I do,' sez he, 'an' badly.'

" 'Very well,' sez I ; 'I'll give you an advice that might help you.'

“He was very thankful to me.

“‘Whatever else you may do to the cook,’ sez I, ‘don’t shake hands with her.’

“Although he followed me advice he only kep’ the job two days, an’ from what he toul’t me, an’ I taking him back to the station, I’m sure ’twasn’t his fault.

“It seems that won thing they taught Miss Chick at the boardin’ school was that all the Jukes an’ Duchesses had turned agin atin’ common-coloured dinners. It should be ayther a green dinner, or a blue dinner, or some other colour that th’ Almighty never intinded food to be.

“‘We’ll have a red dinner,’ sez she, ‘as a complimint to the foxhunters.’ So they did.

“Everything on the table was red, even the table-cloth. They had soup med out of a beet-root that turned all the guests again everything that kem after it, for ’twould make you think that the butler’s nose was afther bleedin’ into the towreen. The wine an’ whisky was all dyed blood red, only won bottle that her mother kep’ for herself.

“ ‘You’ll put none of your decoctions into my drink,’ sez she, ‘but sooner than spoil the look of the table I’ll drink it out of a red glass.’

“ ‘So she did, an’ plinty of it. From what the butler toul’t me more than half his time was taken up fillin’ it for her. The party might have inded peaceable enough only for herself an’ Dr. Soakage fallin’ out over the red praties.

“ ‘What’s this?’ sez the doctor, whin the butler handed ’em to him.

“ ‘They’re kidney praties,’ sez the misthress.

“ ‘They’re a damn sight more like raw kidneys,’ sez he.

“ ‘You’re no gentleman,’ sez she, ‘an’ but a very vulgar man at that.’

“ ‘I may tell you, mam,’ sez he, ‘that your whole party reminds me of the dissectin’-room. ’Tis a wonder you didn’t have a red Injun to wait on us to match the rest of the show, whin you undertook to make cannibals of us wid your raw mate an’ bloody soup. Here’s out of it,’ sez he, walkin’ out, an’ slammin’ the door afther him. ‘Geran-go-Bragh’ was all for runnin’ out to fight him, but the misthress got to the door before



him. She could go no further, but sat down on the mat. The butler said that her face was the reddest thing at the party, an' that her language was much the same colour. I dunno whether the poor man tuk a sup of the red whisky or not, but 'tis what got him the sack was whin he said to her—

“‘I’ll trouble you to git up off that mat, mam, an’ lave me take in the “bloodymange,” or whatever you call the red puddin’ the kitchen-maid is houldin’ outside the door.’

“‘Tis ‘Tortoiseshell Tom’ an’ his wife that lived in Paradise afther that, an’ of all the curiosities that ever lived there they were the quarest. Mr. Bevan is what you’d call him to his face, but if you mintioned that name to anybody in the town they’d ax you who you were talkin’ about. ‘Twas in Agypt they were livin’ before they kem here, and they brought Arab horses wid ’em, an’ indeed, if you seen ’em in the huntin’ field you’d never forget ’em. He was a little foxey ould man wid high cheek bones an’ whiskers on him like a cat (that’s what gev him the name he had). He rode a bay stallion

wid a white face an' chany blue eyes. No person ever before saw the like of the bridle he rode him in. 'Twas near a foot long an' 'twas reported to be solid silver, but I suppose 'twas lies. His wife rode a white mare—till a short time before she foaled—an' she was a quarer sight than Tom. She must surely have a dale of jools if she had more than you'd see on her on a huntin' day, for she'd have four or five twists of a goold chain around her neck an' it hangin' down to the pommel of the saddle afther that. 'Tis two goold bells she had hangin' in her ears. People said that if you got to close quarters wid her you'd hear 'em ringing, but I was never that near her meself. Winter an' summer 'tis a thing like a red cow's tail she'd be carryin' in place of a whip. They toul't me 'twas a fly-flapper. A dale of use 'twas to her in a counthry where for seven months of the year th' only fly that does be troublin' people is a salmon fly. 'Twas said at first that she was a Turk, but the very minute I hard her talk I said that, whoever taught her English kem from Bruff or that neighbourhood, an' 'twas true for

me. It turned out that she was a minister's daughter that wint as a governess to tache some of the Sultan's wives music. Tom was in the police, and 'twas there he met her. I hardly think he had to stale her from the Sultan, she looked like won that might be given away. I know she was a great warrant to play music, for I hard her at the pianny. 'Twas won night that I druv two of th' ould ladies out there to dinner. I wasn't in that kitchen since poor Tom Considine's time, an' indeed I hardly knew it. 'Twas divided into two fair halves, won tiled an' th' other carpeted. The tiled part was for cookin' and the carpeted part was seemingly for music, for 'twas nearly half filled by a big pianny an' a drum.

“As soon as dinner was over, down comes the party, an' of coorse meself an' the servants had to bate a retrate into the scullery. We left the door open, so we could hear an' see what was goin' on, an' I'm glad we did, for 'twas great value. The first thing I heard Mrs. Bevan say, when she kem in, was, 'I must apologise for bringing you down here, but 'tis



th' only dry place in the house. The pianny wouldn't keep in chune twenty-four hours upstairs, an' you know how impossible 'tis to get music out of a wet drum. The damp of this country is killin' me,' sez she, 'an' me husband's beautiful voice isn't near what it was when we were in Agypt.' Wid that she sated herself at the pianny an' hit it a stroke. 'Heavens above,' sez she, 'what's the matter wid it? 'Tis worse than ever.'

“ ‘I beg your pardon, mam,’ sez the cook, running out from the scullery. ‘Maybe ’tis the crame.’

“ ‘What do you mane, woman?’ sez her mistress.

“ ‘’Twas the only place I could think of to keep it away from the cat,’ sez she, liftin’ up the lid an’ takin’ out a pan of crame. She got a month’s warning on the spot, an’ thin the concert began. The mistress knocked the greatest music I ever heard out of that pianny, but ’twas nothin’ to what she did whin she got help from the drum.

“ ‘Would you like to hear the march I

composed for the Sultan ? ' sez she. ' Tom, get the drum, an' call William to play the cymbals.'

" William was a little boy of twelve or fourteen years of age that they had as a page. He was inside in the scullery wid us, an' 'twas in spite of him that the cook an' the housemaid thrun him into the kitchen when he was called. The cymbals were things like two big brass plates that the gorsoon had to hould wallop in' agin won another all the time the Sultan's chune was bein' pled. It must be that he wasn't playin' 'em right, for 'twasn't long till Tom reached over to him an' gev him a rap of the drum-stick on the top of the head.

" ' You're drowndin' the drum,' sez he.

" That broke up the concert, for William left won roar out of him, thrun down the cymbals, an' bolted back into the scullery. The cook comminced screamin', an' said she'd take the law of 'em for batin' her nephew, an' that she'd call me as a witness.

" ' 'Twould be bether for you not to mind me,' sez I. ' He got nothin' but what was due to him.'

“She was a cook I never saw before, an’ I didn’t like the appearance of her.

“ ‘Don’t keep the mare waitin’, miss,’ sez I to won of me ould ladies. ‘ ’Tis hard to trust her when she’s cowl’d.’

“They weren’t three minutes gettin’ ready, an’ I’m thinkin’ that we left just as the best of the concert was beginnin’, for ’twas ayther the cymbals or a fryin’-pan strikin’ something that I hard as I was lavin’ the door.”



## CHAPTER XVIII

DAN HEAPHY

“ THAT’S Ballinamuc. ’Twas a nice, comfortable house not so long ago. You’d never think it, in the state ’tis in now, wid half the slates off it an’ rags an’ ould hats stuck in the windies. There was a fine ould gintleman livin’ there whin I was a gorsoon, won of the rale ould stock that lived free while they had it, an’ died of style an’ starvation afther ’twas all gone. Oliver Macnamara was his name. From the first time I ever knew anything about him, an’ long before that, he was a Sunday man. Glory be to God, don’t you know what a Sunday man is! I thought that even childer that never wint to school knew that. Don’t you know that writs can’t be sarved on a Sunday? I’m toul’t that the law is different now, an’ that they can be sarved in a registhered lether, but I hardly

believe it. Anyhow, in the times I'm tellin' you about, as long as a man kept inside his own house durin' the six days of the week, he could walk out in safety on Sunday. No bailiff could look crooked at him. Ould Mr. Mac wasn't seen out for years, except to go to church on Sunday, or maybe to spind the day wid a neighbour. He was well-liked by everybody, so 'twas hard for the process-sarver to come unknown on him, but as the house was all he had left, he wasn't runnin' any chances on week-days. There was a low, dirty trick pled on the poor gintleman, afther all, an' by won he didn't expect it from. People said it bruk the heart in him : at all events, he died soon afther. Years before that, he tuk a little orphan boy out of the Union, an' rared him up to be a body-servant to him. His name was Dan Heaphy. A terrible smart lad he was from the very first, altho' in them days they gev the like of him no schoolin' in the Union, an' but damn little outside. 'Tis said that he kem from a family of tinkers; I suppose 'twas there he got the bad drop that he showed in the latter end. When times got raly bad with poor Mr.

Mac, an' he was obliged to keep altogether inside the house, he had nothin' to occupy his time. All the servants he had was Dan and th' ould cook. He was a great scholar, an' I'm toul't there was as much books in the house as kept the fire kindled for twelve months for the caretaker that kem there after his death. 'Tis said that the divil do be very busy wid idle people. I suppose 'tis true, or the poor gintleman wouldn't have started in to tache Dan everything he knew himself.

“ He must have had a great brain, for them that knew him well, toul't me that in less than six months he was able to read the smallest print in a newspaper. As good as he was at readin' he was better agin at figures. The quicker he was at the books, the more inclined Mr. Mac was for tachin' him. 'Tisn't English alone he taught him, but Latin. Dan got five or six years' schoolin' this way, an' then it kem to a stop. Poor Mr. Mac wint blind all of a sudden. The very next day afther the doctor said 'twas a hopeless case, Dan left him. That was bad enough, but the next thing he did was



worse. Wid all the worruld before him, no place would do him, but to go down to Gorman the solicitor that had all the writs out agin his poor ould masther. Gorman took him on as a clerk, an' thanks be to God he ped dear for it in the lather end. 'Twasn't more than two or three years till Dan was head clerk an' knew all Gorman's business bether than he did himself.

“At the back of Ballinamuc house there was a garden wid a high wall around it. You could walk straight into it from the house through the back door; there was a little wicket in the wall, but 'twas always kep' locked from th' inside. 'Twas there poor Mr. Mac used to be takin' his exercise durin' the week, when he was in dread to go out in th' open for fear of the writs. Afther the blindness kem on him, th' ould cook used to lade him out there every fine day an' put him sittin' in a chair. Of coorse, Dan knew his habits.

“At this time every thing the poor gintleman ever had was gone from him but just the roof over him. He couldn't be put off of that as long as they couldn't sarve the writ on him.

Some friend or relation was keepin' him in food an' clothes. Now Gorman was very anxious to get the writ sarved, but couldn't think of any way to do it. 'I'd give tin pounds,' sez he won day, 'to have ould Mac's business finished.'

“‘Do you mane that, sir?’ sez Dan.

“‘I do,’ sez he.

“‘The tin pounds is mine,’ sez Dan. ‘Gimme the writ.’

“Himself and Gorman started off together for Ballinamuc. Dan climbed the garden wall an' opened the wicket for Gorman, who walked in and handed the writ to the poor ould blind man. They put him out on the high road afther nine days, an' he died two days afther. You'd hear foolish people sayin' that the like of that work wouldn't thrive wid people. I know bether. All the people I ever knew to make money quick, med it be roguery. Dan Heaphy didn't stop till he threw Gorman out of the business in the selfsame way, an' he died a rich man. His funeral was upwards of a mile long, and his childer are rich and respected this day.

“There’s great changes in the Workhouses since Dan Heaphy was rared in won of ’em. I think they buried most of the childer that wint in to ’em in them days. There’s an odd won of ’em bad enough still, from all accounts. There was a Government enquiry not long ago, to the wesht of us, about the beds in th’ ould people’s wards. An ould woman was sworn as a witness, an’ th’ inspector asked her: ‘Is there vermin in the beds?’

“‘Vermin is it?’ sez she. ‘’Tis the way, it is in them beds, if the two kinds of vermin that’s in ’em was of the won mind about things, they’d lift the Christian out an’ carry him over to the fire, where they could ate him in comfort.’

“There’s Nuns now managin’ the most of the hospitals, an’ a good job they’re makin’ of ’em, altho’ some of the Boards was agin ’em for a long time, on account of the buildin’s they must have put up for ’em. There was a long fight in our own Union before they were appointed. Soon afther the buildin’s was finished an’ the Nuns installed in ’em, there was a meetin’ of the Board. The business was all over, an’ the



guardians just goin' out whin the clerk riz up an' sez, 'I've a complaint here that must be heard.' An' he began to read it out. 'Sister Mary Gonzaga complains of the propinquity of the morgue to her sleepin' apartment. She sez 'twas undoubtedly the will of God that she should be nursin' the sick be day, but He surely never intinded her to be sleepin' wid the dead be night.' The buildin's had to be torn down an' put up on a new plan.

"The poor Nuns in the convent below were in a desperate state th' other day, an' only for the handy kind of a man that Dr. Soakage has in his garden, I dunno what the consequences might be. 'Twas himself was tellin' me about it afther 'twas all over, an' indeed I don't think he'll ever forget all he wint through, the longest day he lives. He's a very inganeous kind of man at mostly anything you'd ax him put his hand to, an' very knowledgeable about everything to do wid a garden, even down to the bees. Indeed, I see him meself handlin' bees as independant as another 'd handle butherflies, an' there wasn't a sting on him afther. The Mother

Suparior was everlastingly borryin' the loan of him from the doctor. What she'd always say was that she wouldn't keep him more than half an hour, but maybe 'tis for the whole day she'd have him. At last the doctor got tired of it, an' said he'd lave him go no more. However, this day whin won of the school childer kem up wid a note, beggin' him for th' honour of God to lave his man go down 'to remove a swarm of bees from where they were a danger to the bodies an' sows of the whole community,' he said he might go for this won time, but never agin. As I toult your honour before, he's a very handy man. He makes all the hives an' everything belongin' to 'em, an' he has a masheen that he calls a fumigathor, that he do be blowin' smoke at the bees wid, till he has 'em distracted mad in a way that they'd ate anybody but himself that would vinture into that garden. Well, he packed up his fumigathor, an' away wid him down to the convint. I was never inside in that convint garden, but from what he toult me, I know that there's a little shrine there wid a figure of Herself as large as life in it. Now it

seems that all them kind of figures are hollow, an' there must be a hole left some place in the castin' of 'em. The hole in this won was above in her poll, behind the goold crown that was on her head. There is no doubt but the divil must have been very busy wid them bees to put 'em where he did. 'Twas into that hole they wint, an' 'twas down they were workin'. He toul't me they were the most vinemous bees he ever see. The poor Nuns was in a crool state. You couldn't see an eye in the Reverend Mother's head, an' she the colour of injigo from rubbin' the blue-bag to the stings. Whin he see the place the bees was, he toul't the Nuns straight off that he'd have nayther hand, act or part in the business, for a common man like himself wasn't fit to be handlin' the like of that of a blessed figure. It kem very hard on him to refuse the cratures whin they toul't him that there wasn't an Ave, no, nor as much as an Amin, said in that shrine for the last three days; but he stuck to it for he was in dread to face Herself. He had the fumigathor packed up, an' was just goin' out the gate, whin he thought of



the Christian Brothers that do be tachin' in the school below in the town. 'Send down for one of the Brothers,' sez he, 'an' if he'll be said by me, we'll baffle them bees yet wid the help of God.'

"The word was hardly out of his mouth before half what childer was in the school was runnin' down wid the message. Here comes the Suparior, an' he havin' a book under his arm, wid the history of all bees in it. The doctor's man toul't me that he was a very knowledgeable gintleman, an' that he surely knew everything about bees that you could learn out of a book, but he was greatly in dread of a sting. The very minute he sees where the bees was, an' whin the doctor's man explained the workin' of the fumi-gathor to him, he knew what should be done. 'Send down to Heirlehy the carpinter,' sez he, 'an' borry the loant of an augur.' The doctor's man toul't me that he got a kind of a cowl'd shiver over him when he hard the word augur, for he knew what 'twas wanted for. He turned to won of the Nuns—an' 'Go into your convint,' sez he, 'an' hould prayin' for me till this job is

done.' So she did. Whin the childer brought th' augur, the Christian Brother cot a hould of it an'—(the Lord between us an' all harm)—'twas in the lower part of her blessed body he comminced to bore the hole. He had the hole nearly bored, whin won of them divils of bees stung him on the top of the nose. The lep he gev finished the hole, an' wint near drivin' th' augur out through her back. Afther that the rest of the job was simple enough. 'Twas into th' augur hole that the doctor's man introduced the fumigathor. Afther he bein' puffin' away for some time the Christian Brother got courage, an' kem down agin an' put his ear up to her. 'I hear nothin',' sez he. 'They must be all stifled.' Then he got paint and putty an' closed the hole in a way that you'd never know any augur wint near her. Just as he was finishin' off the job, by paintin' a goold star over the hole, he gev a sudden lep an' clapped his ear up to her secondly agin. 'Glory be,' sez he. 'The queen is workin' still. We forgot the hole above. 'Tis there they're drawin' air.' He got more putty an' closed that hole too, an' that finished

the job. The doctor was goin' to sack the poor man for stayin' away all day till he toul't him the story. He's laffin' about it ever since, but indeed nayther me nor the man med any joke of it."



## CHAPTER XIX

### MISS WEASEL

“Do you see where the tints are above on the hill? That’s where the races are goin’ to be to-morrow. ’Tis a long time now since the Hunt held ’em there, but forty years ago ’tis there they’d be run year afther year. There was a dale bether horses in them days an’ bether min to ride ’em. Every man used to ride his own horse or else lave him in the stable. Now ’tis licensed gintlemen riders—that’s nayther gintlemin nor riders—that you’ll see wearin’ red coats there to-morrow an’ consequently you’ll very likely see two or three horses kilt. Tryin’ to make jockeys an’ race-horses out of half drunken farmers’ sons an’ hunters whose dams were ploughin’ till the day they were foaled. Whin the gintlemen used to be ridin’ their own hunter an’ knowin’ that there was nothin’ but hunters

in the race they'd make a fine sober round of the coorse till the last fince would be lepped. 'Tis thin you'd see the finish between six or seven. Whippin' an' spurrin' an' cursin'. 'Tisn't the freshest horse would win but the freshest man.

"I was listenin' to the makins of a quare row in that very field more than forty years ago. At the time I hard the conversation I never thought about any trouble risin' out of it, for indeed 'twas harmless enough. 'Twas a woman of coorse that med the trouble an' 'twasn't the first nor the last trouble the same won med. She was a Miss Louisa Johnson, a hard-bitten, bither piece that was bether known as Miss Weasel than be the name her godmother gev her. At this time she was engaged to be married to won of the Walker brothers, no person knew which, an' indeed it wouldn't be safe for you to be askin' 'em any questions, for Dick was drunk an' Jonathan was mad, whin he wasn't too drunk to show the madness. 'Twas Jonathan who overheard the conversation.

"It seems that Miss Johnson sold a mare, some time before this, to an officer in Fermoy.

He christened the mare 'Miss Weasel' an' was runnin' her in a race that day. There was a gintleman named Mr. Georgie Scott, that had the misfortune to be a neighbour to the two Walkers an' the worse misfortune to be very well acquainted wid Miss Weasel. He was lookin' at the mare whin her owner kem up.

" 'What do you think of her?' sez he.

" 'Is that Miss Weasel?' sez Scott.

" ' 'Tis,' said th' officer. 'I wonder you don't know her.'

" 'Miss Weasel is it?' sez Scott, 'I'd know her anywhere if I saw her stripped.'

" The mare, of course, had her clothin' on her. Jonathan Walker was standin' just behind him an' hard the conversation. Off he rushed to tell his brother Dick that Scott said he'd often seen Miss Weasel stripped. He found him in a tint, too drunk to understand a word he said to him. Afther a long time an' a dale of shakin' he got him to understand that 'twas about Miss Weasel he was talkin'.

" 'Me darlin' Weasel is mother naked on the race coorse,' sez he, burstin' out cryin' an' thin



fallin' fast asleep the next minute. Jonathan wint mad first an' got drunker than Dick aftherwards so there was no trouble that day.

“I disremember whether Miss Weasel won the race or not an' I never hard how the Walkers got home but I know that nothin' happened to 'em, for about two o'clock next mornin' they called on Georgie Scott wid a blackthorn stick an' the butt 'ind of a fishin' rod. The sleep wasn't rightly out of his eyes when he kem down to see who was tryin' to break in the door an' 'twas a fortnight afther that before he could open 'em, for the candle he had in his hand gev Jonathan a great chance to hit him across the bridge of the nose wid the butt of the rod. 'Twas all that saved his life was that Dick quinched the candle wid the first stroke he med wid the blackthorn. Once he was in the dark he had some chance, for of coorse he knew his way about his own house bether than they did. He got a holt of a spud that he had for cuttin' weeds but 'twas never rightly proved at the trial whether 'twas that or the squalls of the servant gerrul that put the run on the Walkers. The

police tuk up the case an' the Walkers were arrested an' clapped into Cork jail. 'Twas a great trial. Miss Weasel swore that Scott was a liar an' that he never see her stripped on or off a racecourse. Scott swore he never did ayther an' didn't want to. Wid that Jonathan roared out in the dock—

“ ‘You're a bigger liar than ever now.’

“ The case lasted two days, and the Walkers misconducted themselves to such a degree in the dock that th' ould Judge gev them both twelve months' hard labour.

“ The poor ould gintleman was so bothered between the two Weasels—the woman and the mare—that he never knew which of 'em was stripped, an' said that he hoped it would be a warnin' to all concerned not to meddle wid a lady's clothin' in future.

“ Very soon afther the two convicts were released Miss Weasel married Dick. That was the quare weddin'. The bridegroom was very drunk to commence wid an' 'twas worse he was gettin' durin' the day. Jonathan was the best man, an' a troublesome job he had wid his

brother. He tried his best all the mornin' to get him dacintly dressed for the ceremony but 'twas no good for him. Nothin' would plaze Dick but boots and breeches. They came to blows over the spurs, but Dick got his way about them too.

“ ‘I often hard my father say that a man should never be separated from his spurs,’ said he, ‘You could never tell the minute you might want ’em.’

“ As soon as they got back from the church Dick threw himself down on a lounge an’ wint fast asleep an’ sted there till ’twas nearly time to be goin’ to the train. Whin the wife woke him he was soberer than he’d been for a week before that.

“ ‘Where’s Jonathan ? ’ sez he.

“ ‘He’s gone home,’ sez the bride.

“ ‘I won’t stir a step out of this till I see him,’ sez Dick. ‘I don’t know what I am, whether ’tis bridegroom or best man, an’ I wouldn’t take your word for a smaller thing than that, Weasel,’ sez he, ‘I remember meself an’ Jonathan tossin’ for you yesterday, but I



be damned if I remember which of us won the toss.'

" 'I don't know which of you won the toss,' sez she, 'but I'm married to you, an' here's me lines to prove it.'

" 'Twas a nice beginning to a married life an' 'twas only a sample of the way they carried on afther. 'Twas hardly twelve months till the bailiffs seized what they had. Won of the weddin' presents that the bride got was a carriage, an' whin the bailiffs undertook to drive that away wid 'em she wound her arms through the spokes of a wheel and dared 'em to go on. They wint for the police, but whin they kem back she had the wheels taken off an' sunk in the river where they couldn't find 'em. That bate 'em an' she kep' the carriage. Everything else was seized, but they lived on in the house for a long time by stripping the lead off the roof an' selling it. Of coorse they never ped any rent. Whin the roof fell in on 'em all their relations clubbed together an' ped their passage to Australia. I never heard any more about 'em. Jonathan died the very way you'd

expect him to. He got into a row with a gang of tinkers at Bartlemy Fair an' won of 'em hit him a box of a solderin' iron on the poll. They wint very near hangin' the tinker on account of it. All that saved him was that there happened to be won man on the jury that knew Jonathan. His name was Scott.

“There was many a quare thing to be seen an' hard at the races an' football matches in them days an' maybe 'tis the same way still, but 'tis seldom I troubles 'em since they took to buildin' finces round 'em an' makin' a man pay for goin' in. 'Tis five or six years ago since I was at won an' thin I got a free pass from Larry Hynes that owned 'Limerick Lad.' He won the same day an' 'twas time he did for poor Larry was on his last legs an' them not too steady under him from all the whisky they were carryin'. He had him backed for more than he had in the woruld an' was too nervous to watch the race. Himself an' meself was above on the very top of the stand, an' he houldin' me be th' arm wid his two eyes closed. I was watchin' the race very close an' reportin' to him how the horse

was takin' every fince. When he was safe over the last lep an' I saw that he'd win, 'Open your eyes, sir,' sez I, 'he's winnin' aisy.'

"As soon as he see the horse passin' the post he tried to shout but couldn't, for there was something chokin' him. He pulled off his hat an' thrun it up in th' air into the thick of the crowd, an' thin down wid him through the people head first like he'd be playin' football. When he got down to the paddock an' met the horse comin' in he med another grab for his hat an' whin he found he was bareheaded he looked around him an' thin med a rush at the most remarkable hat he seen near him. This was on the head of a fat man that looked like a cross between a bishop and a bookmaker. 'Twas won of them half-bred high hats—a kind of round square—wid a very wide brim. He snatched it off the gintleman's head and left two or three yells out of himself—he had his voice back now—before he thrun it out over the rails into the middle of the coorse. I didn't see so mad a man since as th' owner of the hat. 'Twasn't five minute till he had what stewards



an' offeecials was in the paddock collected round him. Most of 'em knew Larry, an' that there was nothin' wrong wid him but excitement, so they were doin' their best to satisfy the fat man. Won of 'em wint out an' got the hat, another kem to Larry an' toul't him he must give it back an' apologise. So he did. The fat gintleman was nearly frothin' at the mouth wid rage whin Larry began shakin' hands wid him, houldin' the hat at arm's length.

“ ‘Smile,’ sez he. ‘Smile, ye fat swine. Smile, I tell you, or I’ll kick the crown out of it.’

“The fat gintleman looked madder than ever, but was dumb angry.

“ ‘I can’t bear to look at you,’ sez Larry. ‘Here’s your hat.’ Wid that he crammed it down over the gintleman’s head, face an’ all, an’ med off wid himself into the crowd. I suppose there’s people that wouldn’t consider it an apology at all, but ’twas th’ only one I ever hard that Larry med in his life. That was the luckiest day he ever saw. He was bettin’ very heavy, an’ the drunker he got the more winners

he picked. Every pocket he had was full of notes whin I was tyin' him on to the side of the car that night to drive him home. I wasn't any too sober meself, an' I should be very thankful to th' ould mare for the way she brought us home, for 'tis to the rings of the hames the reins was buckled in place of the bit. I dunno was it meself or some other blaguard that did it. Poor Larry. God help us, 'twas the last day's pleasure he ever had. He got a sevare attack of the D.T.'s out of it, an' the nurse that brought him through married him. The two of 'em got struck wid religeon soon afther, an' a friend of mine, that wint over to see the National run, toul me that he seen him in the streets of Liverpool batin' a drum in the Salvation Army. 'Twas a great surprise for me, for indeed there was a dale more sulphur than salvation in any conversation I ever had wid him. 'Tis a quare woruld, an' judgin' from the preparations they're makin' for it, the next won will be quarer.

“Before poor Larry got religeon I used to see a dale of him, for 'twas outside Bridgetown

that he trained his racehorses. He lived in the town, an' there was hardly a day but what I'd drive him out to his stable, an' 'tis often I'd be kept waitin' the whole day to bring him back, so of course I got to know all the stable sacrets. He had an' ould black horse wid four white legs called 'The Fiddler' at that time. He won a dale of small races in his day, but he was nearly done his work an' was only used for schoolin' the young horses. More strangers used to come to Bridgetown for the huntin' in them days than what comes now, an' amongst them there was a boastin', blitherin' Englishman named Simcox, that had a dale of money an' the best of horses, but 'twas only wid his mouth he could ride 'em. To hear him talkin' afther a day's huntin' you'd think 'twas as a missioner he kem to this country, to convert the natives to the right way of ridin' to hounds. I dunno what way he offinded Larry, but at all events he hated the sight and sound of him. Won day an' I drivin' him out to his place he sez to me, 'I'd give fifty pounds to get even wid that swine, an' I'll do it, too, before the sason is



over.' He hadn't very long to wait for his chance. Whin I tell you how he did it you'll say 'twas a murder to spoil the like of him wid religeon.

"'Twas the day of the Hunt races, an' everybody knew that Simcox should win the cup wid a grey horse he had unless he rode him himself, an' that's what he had to do, for Larry was canvassin' the counthry for a month before that till he had promises from every huntin' man in it that they wouldn't ride Simcox's horse. Whin I went out that mornin' to drive Larry to the races, 'Take the mare out from the car,' sez he, 'an' put her in the stable.' So I did. 'There was never harness on "The Fiddler,"' sez he. 'Would you be in dread to drive him?'

"'I would not,' sez I, 'if you'll sit up on the car wid me an' share the danger.'

"'Wait a while,' sez he. 'He isn't ready yet. We must blacken his legs an' get the hair rubbed up the wrong way on him to make him look as like won of Quilty's hearse horses as we can. Don't forget to put a bottle of blackin' into the well of the car,' sez he to won of his boys.

‘We’ll surely have to put another coat on his legs before we get to the course.’

“I didn’t know ‘The Fiddler’ meself when they brought him out wid every hair on him standin’ up an’ his legs the blackest part of him. You’d think he was drivin’ all his life the quiet way he started off wid the car. In place of runnin’ away wid us I had to use the whip on him. Whin we got to the course I put the nose bag on him like I’d be feedin’ him an’ that disguised him entirely. Simcox had to ride his own horse an’ nobody was surprised whin he refused the first fince. He rode back cursin’ an’ swearin’ an’ jabbin’ the poor horse in the mouth wid the bit.

“‘I can’t understand why the dirty brute did it,’ sez he. ‘He’d win by a distance only for refusin’.’

“‘He would not,’ sez Larry, who was lettin’ on to be half drunk. ‘He’s no more good than yourself. Here’s fifty pounds that sez I’ll bate you round the course on th’ ould horse Jerry has under his car.’ Wid that he pulled out a roll of notes an’ shook ’em in Simcox’s face.

‘Count ’em,’ sez he, ‘I think there’s fifty there, but maybe I’m seein’ double.’

“Some of the gintlemen kem between ’em an’ tried to laugh the matter off, for they didn’t like to see Larry losin’ his money whin they knew he had but little of it. Simcox thought ’twas a great chance to show off his bravery, so he took him up at once, an’ then Larry began to bet out of himself. Nobody would bet wid him but Simcox, for they thought he was drunk.

“‘I won’t lave him ride me poor ould horse,’ sez I to Simcox, ‘unless I’m well paid for it.’

“‘How much?’ sez he.

“‘He’ll surely kill him,’ sez I, ‘for he’s mad drunk an’ I won’t take less than tin pounds for him.’

“He was no gintleman an’ he held bargainin’ wid me till I tuk nine pound fifteen. ’Twasn’t till I had the money in me pocket that I tuk the harness off ‘The Fiddler’ an’ let Larry saddle him.

“’Twas a very slow run race. For about half round the course Larry was houldin’ ‘The Fiddler’ back an’ Simcox had to ketch a houl



of the saddle behind at every lep so he was in no great hurry. 'Twas like a miracle to people whin they saw the way that Quilty's ould hearse horse was leppin', an' that was nothin' till they see him stretchin' out an' lavin' Simcox as if he was standin' still. There was won very boggy field in the course, so whin 'The Fiddler' passed the winnin' post his legs were as white as ever. Simcox was so mad whin he kem in that he couldn't see that or nothin' else, an', of coorse, nobody was mane enough to tell him."

## CHAPTER XX

### CAPTAIN MINTIN

“I OFTEN toul't your Honour I was fond of cooks, an' that cooks was fond of me. 'Tis no wonder they would, for there's the breed of a cook in meself. 'Tis more than a hundred years since me grandmother was cook in the very house you're livin' in now. She'd frighten you telling about the quare things she see, an' the mad divil of a masther she had. He kem from some place foreign, an' nobody knew much about him except that he always had plinty money. His name was Captain Mintin. 'Twas thought he was a say Captain, but people were in dread to ask him any questions. He'd think no more of shootin' a man than of atin' his dinner. There was only himself an' won daughter there, nobody ever see the wife, and 'twas thought she must have been a black, for the daughter was a kind of a dark pale, wid a yalla

shade through it, an' her hair was fuzzy. They were left greatly to themselves, for none of the ladies or gintlemen would make ayther up or down wid 'em, an' 'twasn't long till the Captain was at open war wid all his neighbours. He was the greatest shot wid a pistol that was ever seen in these parts, an' no wonder he would for he was ever an' always practisin'. He could shoot a bird flyin', or a rabbit runnin' between two holes. Me grandmother never got over the fright she got the first time she see him killin' a pig that they were goin' to make bacon of. He'd allow no such thing as a butcher into his place, but med his min hunt the poor pig out of the sty, an' as she was passin' him at a gallop, he put a bullet in one eye and out th' other, an' shot her in the throat too before she fell, so as to bleed her. He kep' a couple of grand horses, but never jined in the hunt, or any other sport—he'd as soon shoot a fox as any other thing—an' 'tis only afther dark he'd ever go<sup>r</sup> ridin'. Maybe 'tis twinty miles away from home, he'd be seen in the middle of the night gallopin' on the road as if the divil was behind him, an'



many a won said he was. They were livin' there about twelve months when the daughter hard about a great ball party that was to be given in Cork. 'Twas won of them kind of balls that any person has a right to go as long as they have the money to pay at the door, so she said she'd go. Me grandmother said that there was no show, but all the fine clothes an' jools that young lady had. She dressed herself up the day before the party to show herself to the servants, an' me grandmother always said that she never rightly knew how yalla she was till she seen her in a white gown wid diamonds plastered over her breast. The captain wouldn't go a step wid her, so she had to go alone.

“The dear knows 'tis little I know about balls or parties—a ‘hand-out’ of a glass of whisky is all the pleasure I ever got out of won of 'em—but 'tis only reasonable to think that they were carried on different in them days to what they are now. Anyhow me grandmother said that there was always won gentleman for stewardin' the music an' introducin' strangers to won another—she disremembered his title, if he

ever had won. Whin Miss Mintin—Virginny was her name—walked into the ballroom everybody stared, but nobody spoke a word to her. She had a divil of a timper, like her father, an' you may be sure she got madder an' madder every minute, as she sat wid her back agin the wall watchin' all the rest of the gerruls dancin'. At last she couldn't stand it any longer. Up she lepped an' out wid her into the street. There was a horseman just passin' at the time. She called him over to her.

“ ‘Have you a good horse?’ sez she.

“ ‘The best in Cork,’ sez the man.

“ ‘Do you want to earn tin pounds?’ sez she.

“ ‘I'd do a dale for it,’ sez he.

“ Wid that she pulled a diamond ring off her finger an'—‘I'll tell you how to airn it aisy,’ sez she, ‘but mind what I'm goin' to say to you, for maybe your life may depind on it. You must ride back to me home an' give a message to me father—I'll tell you the road afther—but you must do just as I tell you, for he is a dangerous man an' might shoot you.’

“ ‘He won’t,’ sez the man, beginnin’ to ride off, ‘for I won’t give him the chance.’

“ ‘Come back,’ sez she. ‘ ’Tisn’t tin pounds I’ll give you, but this, an’ ’tis worth fifty,’ an’ she held out the diamond ring to him.

“ ‘Live or die,’ sez he, ‘I’ll chance it.’

“ She toul’t him the road to go, an’ what to do whin he got there.

“ ‘Throw a fist of gravel at the windy over the hall door,’ sez she; ‘an’ whin you’ll see a man openin’ it be sure an’ keep callin’ out “Miss Virginny!” “Miss Virginny!” “Miss Virginny!” If you don’t he’ll put a bullet into you before you’ll stir, or maybe two.’

“ The man acted very faithful to her, although he had the diamond in his pocket from the start. He kem to the house, an’ he threw the gravel. Captain Mintin kem to the windy wid a pistol in his hand.

“ ‘Stand your ground,’ sez he. ‘ ’Tis no good for you to run, I can shoot a bird flyin’.’

“ ‘Miss Virginny!’ “Miss Virginny!’ sez the man.



“‘That’s me daughter,’ sez the captain.  
‘What’s wrong wid her?’

“‘She’s insulted at the ball in Cork,’ sez he.

“‘Blood an ’ounds,’ sez the captain. ‘Tell  
’em to saddle the black horse.’

“Tin minutes later he was knocking fire out of the Cork road, wid a pistol in every pocket he had, an’ two more tied round his waist. Whin he walked into the ballroom there was Miss Virginny wid her back to the wall, in the same spot still.

“‘What ails you?’ sez her father.

“‘Hunger is ailin’ me,’ sez she, ‘an’ thirst is ailin’ me, an’ insults is ailin’ me. I didn’t ate nor drink nor dance since I kem into this cursed room’—she had the father’s timper, an’ ’twas stickin’ out all over her—‘if you’re the man you used to be you’ll give me satisfaction.’

“He reached out his hand an’ grabbed a houlth of a gintleman that was dancin’ past him.

“‘You have me daughter insulted,’ sez he.

“‘I have not,’ sez the gintleman. ‘I don’t know the lady at all.’

“ ‘Why didn’t you dance wid her?’ roared the captain.

“ ‘How could I dance wid a lady I wasn’t introduced to?’ sez the gintleman.

“ ‘That’s true,’ sez the captain. ‘Where’s the steward? I think I’ll kill him to commence wid.’

“ ‘Do,’ sez Miss Virginny.

“ ‘So he did. ’Twas out in the garden he shot him. When he kem back into the ball-room Miss Virginny was dancin’ wid the man he had the first talk wid, an’ all the other gintlemen were standin’ in a row waitin’ for their turn. The rest of the gerruls was agin the wall.

“ ‘ ’Tis a pity you were so late coming, Papa,’ sez Miss Virginny. ‘I never enjoyed a party so much as I’m enjoyin’ this won now.’

“ ‘Two or three days afther Miss Virginny comin’ home from the ball a strange man rode up an’ knocked at the door. ’Twas the captain that opened it to him.

“ ‘What do you want here?’ sez he very rough. He wanted no visitors near the place.

“ ‘I’ve a ring here belonging to the lady of the house,’ sez he.

“‘Are you the man that brought the message?’ sez the captain.

“‘I am,’ sez he.

“‘Then you’re nearer to bein’ a gintleman than anything I’ve met in this damn counthry,’ sez the captain. ‘Come in,’ sez he. He put the horse in the stable, an’ kem in an’ sted there for a month. Himself an’ the captain bekem great friends, an’ Miss Virginny fell in love wid him. His name was Morgan. He was the son of a horse dalin’ tobacconist in Cork, an’, of coorse, was no way like a gintleman, but me grandmother said she always knew that the captain wasn’t won ayther. ’Tis aisy to be talkin’ afther things are found out, but I’ll engage she never said so at the time.

“The horse Morgan brought wid him was nearly as good as the captain’s two, an’ ’twasn’t long till they tuk to night ridin’ together. The captain had such a habit med of it ever since he kem to the counthry that there was no notice taken by the neighbours. The only thing the two of ’em was ever near fallin’ out about was pistol shootin’. All the taching he could give



him wouldn't make Morgan a good shot. Wonday the captain called him every clumsy clown he could lay his tongue to, and worse, till at last Morgan lost his timper.

“ ‘Put down your pistol and stand up to me wid your fists,’ sez he, ‘an’ I’ll show you how clumsy I am.’

“ So he did. The captain was going about the place half blind for a week afther. In place of bein’ mad at him they were bether friends than ever for a while.

“ ‘Twas a coach was runnin’ wid the mail from Dublin to Cork in them days an’ there was a great commotion whin ’twas stopped an’ robbed be two mounted min between Kilfinane an’ Mallow. The police an’ yeomen were scourin’ the counthry for weeks afther but the robbers were never cot. A few days afther the robbery Morgan and Miss Virginny eloped an’ she tuk all her jools an’ what money she could get at. They had a whole day’s start of the captain, for he used to spind the most of the day in bed an’ didn’t find it out till evenin’. To make matters worse he got some kind of

a fit like the fallin' sickness out of the passion he got into an' that delayed him more. He was a week away an' then kem back widout Miss Virginny, but me grandmother said that won of th' other servants saw the jools wid him so he must have overtook 'em. She always said that he surely shot 'em both the minute he met 'em, an' from all accounts he was the very man that would do the like. He tuk to drinkin' very heavy an' didn't go outside the door night nor day for a long time after. 'Twas near the middle of the winter before he started the night ridin' an' 'twasn't very long afther that till the coach was stopped agin in the same place but there was only won robber this time. He robbed it right enough, but as he was ridin' off the guard fired a blunderbuss at him. 'Twas thought at the time he missed him but that the robber's horse tuk fright an' ran away wid him. Anyhow he didn't attack 'em any more.

“The next mornin' the captain's black horse was found dead in the stable wid a hole near as big as your fist in his side, just behind the saddle. Me grandmother said that the captain

wint distracted mad about the place, cryin' like a child an' cursin' like a divil. A few days afther that he began to sell off everything about the place, an' he sacked all the servants but me grandmother. She was in dread of her life to stay wid him, but she was more in dread to run away, for she often hard him boastin' about shootin' the rabbit between two holes. 'Twas just as well for her that she sted wid him for he gev her twinty pounds more than was due to her the mornin' that he saddled his other horse an' rode off. He never was hard of from that day to this, but he was years gone before the people of the counthry had the courage to say that 'twas he that robbed the coach. Me grandmother lived to be a very ould woman, an' up to the day of her death she was tellin' us fresh stories about him. She'd always begin by sayin', 'I'll tell it now for I don't suppose there's any danger that he'll come back. I wish to God people were that much in dread of me.' "



## CHAPTER XXI

### CAHIRMEE FAIR

“No. You’ll hardly get a car at all to-day or for two days more. They’re all engaged. Tim Canovan, the daler, has meself for three days of the fair these last twinty years an maybe for the day before it. He do be drivin’ round the counthry wid Naylan the Vet tryin’ to persuade the farmers that ’twould be bether for ’em to sell their horses at home than to have all their disases published to the woruld at the fair. I’ll have the car standin’ on this very spot for the three days, an’ your Honour is welcome to a sate on it whenever you’re tired of dodgin’ kicks amongst the crowd of horses. Canovan an’ Naylan will be busy in the fair, so you needn’t mind ’em. There do be many a quare thing said an’ done here, an’ you’ll have a bether view off the car. ’Tis a pity you weren’t

here a little sooner. You'd see a very mad man. He was a farmer from near Charleville. I know him well. Canovan was sated on the side of the car whin this man rode up an' sez—

“ ‘I've a horse here that you'll surely buy. He's the best hunter in the county Limerick. The masther of the hounds could tell you that he can't be bate over a counthry.’

“ Canovan looked the horse over an'—

“ ‘What's your name?’ sez he.

“ ‘John Gleeson,’ sez the man.

“ ‘Oh, I beg your pardon,’ sez Canovan. ‘I med a mistake. I thought you must be a brother to a man I met here last year. Th' only man that ever toult me the truth about a horse.’

“ ‘I have a brother,’ sez Gleeson, lookin' very plazed; ‘maybe 'twas him.’

“ ‘’Tis more than likely,’ sez Canovan, ‘for he toult me the very same story about his horse. I bought him an' found that he toult me nothin' but the truth. I tried me best an' I couldn't bate him over a counthry, an' I found aftherwards that there wasn't a combination of min in

the city of Cork that could bate him over a counthry. Sticks an' whips was all the same to him.'

"The man rode off very mad, but I'd nearly say that Canovan will buy that horse afther all. The story will get about the fair, an' won't add anything to his value. He'll come at him agin on the second day. There's dalers from all over the woruld here to-day—Frinch, Germans, an' Italians. Where they do be all put to sleep in the village below is a great mystery to me. There must be four or five in some of the beds. 'Tis the very same way at all the fairs. You can't get a bed to yourself no matter what you'd be willing to pay for it. I hard Tim tellin' won time about the way he got a bed to himself whin every other bed in the place had two or three in it. He wint to bed airly in th' evenin', an' whin the man that was to be his bedfellow kem up he was a black stranger to him, an' he didn't like the look of him at all. The more he was strippin' himself the less he liked him. He was between two minds whether he'd rise an' lave the bed to him



entirely or not, but he was never a man that liked to lave go of a thing once he had his grip of it until all failed him. He comminced turnin' an' twistin' an' rowlin' himself in the bed, an' every once in a while he'd take a fit of grindin' his teeth an' scratchin' himself. At last, just as the stranger was ready to get into bed wid him, he began clawin' at himself worse than ever, an' sez he—

“ ‘ ’Tis what is killin' me entirely is the place I can't reach. Will you scratch me back for me up between me two shoulders an' God reward you ? ’ ”

“ ‘ What ails you ? ’ sez the stranger.

“ ‘ ’Tis the hate of the bed that's doin' it to me,' sez Tim. ‘ I'm in dread 'tis but little sleep you'll get wid me this night. Two in a bed is a dale hotter than won.' ”

“ The stranger stept back an' med no advance towards scratchin' his back for him.

“ ‘ But what ails you ? ’ sez he again.

“ ‘ ’Tis what all the doctors in Cork never before saw on a man,' sez Tim, ‘ an' I'm beginnin' to think they'll never cure me.' ”

“ ‘In the name of God tell me what ails you ? ’ sez the stranger agin beginnin’ to put on his trousers.

“ ‘ ’Tis the mangy itch I cot off an owld horse,’ sez Tim, ‘an’ now scratch me back for me an’ I’ll be prayin’ for you.’

“ ‘Tis outside the door the stranger finished dressing himself, an’ Tim had the room to himself for the two nights of the fair.

“ If you’ll ever see a very innocent lookin’ man ladin’ a horse in this fair ’tis then you’d bether be mindin’ yourself. I see a very innocent lookin’ ould Frinchman to rob a Northern daler of fifty pounds the natest you ever see done. There should be a medal struck for any man that could bate a Belfast horse-coper. The hottest part of hell would give won of ’em chilblains. Th’ ould Frinchman was standin’ just where we are now, houldin’ one of the very best lookin’ horses you ever see be a halter. The Belfast man was passin’ by, never thinkin’ that the horse was for sale at all, whin the Frinchman spoke to him. ‘Ver’ nice ’oss this. Not so ? ’ sez he.

“ ‘He’s all that,’ sez the Northerner. ‘You must have ped a big price for him.’

“ ‘Yes,’ sez the Frinchman, ‘but I do not like ’im. I sell him.’

“ ‘What’s wrong?’ sez the Northerner.

“ ‘He has vun very nasty vulgaire ’abit,’ sez the Frinchman, ‘he does go Gluk, Gluk, Gluk, wid his insides ven he do trot. Ver’ nasty. My ladies would not like it.’

“ ‘Is that all?’ asked the other.

“ ‘No,’ sez Frinchy. ‘Dere is one oder ting. I cannot remember ze naime. What you call it ven ze ’oss do not exactly eat nicely out of ze manger? Another ver’ nasty ’abit. My ladies would not like it.’

“ Afther a dale of bargainin’ the Belfast man ped fifty pounds an’ went off laffin’, ladin’ what looked like a two hundred pound horse.

“ Next morning I was at the railway station as the mail was startin’. Th’ ould Frinchman was just gettin’ in whin the Belfast man cot houlth of him.

“ ‘Look here,’ sez he, ‘you must take that horse back. He’s a crib biter.’



“‘Crib biter,’ sez Frinchy. ‘Ah, sank you so much. Dat is de vord I could not remember. Nasty vulgaire ’abit. My ladies do not like it. Good-bye. I go by dis train.’

“It tuk three porthers an’ the ticket puncher to pull the Belfast man out of the windy of the carriage as the train was goin’ out of the station.

“Look at that woman comin’ towards us. She’s the divil, the Lord save us. There isn’t a horse in the fair can travel like her. She’s walkin’ an’ runnin’ afther that grey horse in front of her ever since the fair opened this mornin’ an’ she isn’t tired yet. She’s an evicted tinant an’ the man that’s on the horse has her farm. ’Twould be as well for him to go home for she’ll never lave him sell it. Every time a buyer stops him she comminces shoutin’, ‘Grabber’ till a crowd collects an’ thin of coorse he must run. A man stopped him while ago an’—‘How is that horse bred?’ sez he.

“‘I’ll tell you,’ sez she, leppin’ in between ’em. ‘His name is Grabber an’ he’s got by a ‘Bum Bailiff’ out of a ‘Batherin’ Ram’ an’ now I’ll give you the pedigree of the thing

that's ridin' him.' So she did an' if 'twas true, there wasn't a legitimate child in his family for siven ginerations. The police themselves are in dread of her for she has a tongue that could rise a blister on a helmet. 'Tis a pity the Suffragettes don't know that we have the like of her here. They'd surely recruit her. If she once got inside the door she'd have the House of Commons to herself in five minutes, an' 'tis little she'd care about the stomach pump which ever way they worked it. There was a young boy here this mornin' that got the best of Tim an' that's what but few people can say. He was ridin' past the car on a nice lookin' horse when Tim called out to him, 'Hi; bay horse.' The boy rode over to him, thinkin' that he had a buyer. Tim looked the horse over an' saw somethin' he didn't like. 'Many are called,' sez he, 'but few are chosen. Pass on, boy, pass on.'

" 'Why so?' sez the boy.

" 'He has a spavin',' sez Tim.

" 'He has not,' sez the boy.

" 'Don't I see it?' sez Tim.

“ ‘You do not,’ sez the boy.

“ ‘What was he fired for?’ sez Tim.

“ ‘For a guinea,’ sez the boy, putting out his tongue at him an’ ridin’ off.

“ ‘I’d like to be the father of a boy like that,’ sez Tim. ‘He has all his wits about him.’

“ ‘Maybe you are,’ sez Naylan. ‘ ’Tis a wise father that knows all his own childer, an’ ’tis the very place I’d expect to meet won belongin’ to you.’

“ ‘ ’Tis for castin’ horses I brought you here, Mr. Naylan,’ sez Tim, ‘an’ not for castin’ slurs on me reputation. Go and try, can you knock a grunt out of that mare beyond.’

“ There were two gipsy dalers here last year that med me laugh hearty. They were about buying a big camel of a gander of a horse that was up to seventeen hands high. Won of ’em mounted him an’ started gallopin’ round the field to try his wind. You could hear him roarin’ if you were in the other worruld.

“ ‘Is he sound?’ sez the man on the ground.

“ ‘What kind of sound do you like?’ sez the horseman.



“ ‘A sound sound,’ sez the first man.

“ ‘That’s th’ only kind of sound I can’t knock out of him,’ sez the horseman leppin’ down an’ makin’ a punch at th’ ould horse’s stomach wid his stick. ‘Grrumph’ sez th’ ould horse.

“ ‘Why I do believe he’s got a bear in him,’ sez he, droppin’ the reins an’ runnin’ away as if he was in dread.

“ ‘Tis all very fine for you an’ me to be sittin’ up here on the side of the car laffin an’ jokin’ at what we sees and hears, but believe me there’s many a poor innocent man investin’ his money in horses to-day that will feel more like cryin’ than laffin’ to-morrow mornin’ when he sees what he has, afther the groceries have stopped circulatin’ in ’em. There’s horses here this minute that have more than thirty shillins’ worth of drugs an’ ginger in their systems.

“ There’s won trade that’s gone entirely out of this fair an’ that’s the droves of colts that used to be brought in from the west. There was min that used to be buyin’ ’em all the spring in the small fairs, drivin’ ’em in a herd

from won to another, sellin' an' buyin' an' swappin' as they wint till they kem here. This was the last fair they'd try in Ireland before shippin' what they had over to Bristol. Then they'd start walkin' all over England from won market to another till they'd have 'em sold out. Only for the walkin' there's no life I'd sooner have than it. I knew a man named Billy Hogan that was doin' it for thirty years or more. 'Twould delight you to hear him tellin' of all he went through, an' you may be sure he enjoyed a dale of villainy that he never toul't about. The poor crature isn't much the bether of it all now, although he med plinty money while he was at it. He married a barmaid that he met some place on his travels an' never had a day's luck afther. She was a very good lookin' woman, but 'twas a mad man that would put an English barmaid to live on a small Irish farm an' expect a comfortable life for himself afther. I dunno did Billy expect it or not, but I'm damn well sure he didn't get it. The day he brought her home she stood in the door an' looked around the kitchen.

“ ‘We never keep a fire for the pigs in England,’ sez she, ‘but I always heard you kept ’em more comfortable in this country. Now show me your house.’

“ ‘Twas when Billy turned out the pig an’ toul’t her to sit down an’ make herself at home that the war began. That’s fifteen years ago an’ ’tis ragin’ still. She med him buy her a pianny, an’ of course he had to build a house to put it in. She couldn’t have more childer if ’twas in Skibbereen he got her an’ she’s bringin’ ’em all up like herself. All poor Billy med, an’ med hard, is nearly gone an’ I’m sorry for it. ’Tisn’t long ago since I was talkin’ over ould times wid him. ‘Tell me,’ sez I, ‘what’s the greatest piece of roguery you ever committed in your travels?’

“ ‘I only ever did won thing,’ said he, ‘that I’m repintin’ of. I robbed a parson at Ipswich. The dacintist an’ the simplest gintleman I met, before or since. What’s troublin’ me most about it is that he died last year.’

“ ‘Why should that trouble you?’ sez I. ‘He can’t be a witness agin you now.’



“ ‘ ’Tis there you’re makin’ the mistake,’ said he. ‘He’ll surely be waitin’ for me over. I soult him a colt in th’ open market for thirty pounds that wasn’t worth thirty shillin’s, for he fell in the ship an’ ricked his back. The next month I was in Ipswich market agin. He toul me his story an’ I swapped another colt wid him gettin’ twenty pounds boot. I never missed a market in that town for two years an’ held swappin’ wid him all the time till I had almost two hundred pounds of his money an’ at the last he didn’t have a horse, nor nothin’ like a horse. God help us. Sometimes I do be thinkin’ that there can’t be much more punishment due to me for ’tis on me last visit to Ipswich I got married.’

“ ‘ Billy had a man called Bruiser—I never hard any other name for him—that used to be drovin’ along wid him. You never see a more desperate lookin’ character than he was. He was nearer seven foot high than six, an’ only for it bein’ under his hat you’d never think ’twas a face he had. He got a kick from a horse won time into the middle of it that druv his nose in an’ his eyes

out, an' I suppose his jaw must be bruk at the same time, for his mouth was under won ear. He was always lookin' for a fight, but it never kem to blows, for the look of him would frighten the bravest man in the worruld. Many a time he'd persuade a man that he was afther buyin' a horse whin he only axed the price of him out of curiosity. As a rule they'd pull out their money an' pay for it whin they'd see Bruiser strippin' himself for a fight, sooner than face him. If you saw him getting a wild colt out of the herd you'd expect him to be kilt every minute. He'd just run into the thick of 'em wid a long pole wid a flag on th' end of it an' commence proddin' an' gougin' the won he'd want till it'd run out, an' then he'd chase it down the street to show its action. A colt that'd kick a sixpence off the road if left to himself, would step up to his eyes when he'd see Bruiser an' the flag behind him. An ould lady saw him doin' this won day and she said she'd have him persecuted for croolity to animals.

“ ‘You know nothin’ at all about croolity,

ma'am,' said Bruiser. 'Bring a peeler to me an' I'll show it to you, for I'll put a face an' head on him that 'll make you think he's my brother.'

"Th' only peeler in that market was a little fat ould man that would arrest you by writin' your name down in his book, and tellin' you to meet him at the coort next mornin', in place of knockin' you sinseless wid a baton an' thin puttin' the handcuffs on you, like they would in Tralee where Bruiser kem from.

"'What's your name?' sez he, takin' out his book an' pincil.

"'What's that to you?' roared Bruiser, spittin' on his hands to give him a bether grip of the pole.

"'You must be makin' a mistake, ma'am,' sez the peeler. 'I'm sure from the appearance of this man he wouldn't hurt a fly.' Wid that he med off and put the length of the market between himself an' Bruiser.

"Here's Tim comin', so I must be gettin' ready to start. Good luck an' safe home to your Honour."



## CHAPTER XXII

### BIDDY'S TREE

“THEM houses not fit to live in, is it? Begob, I remember the time whin there was tin or twinty times as many people livin’ in the same place, in tin times worse houses, an’ ’tis many the fine healthy lump of a child I see comin’ out of ’em, wid every flay on ’em as big as grains of whate from the dint of health. An’ I wouldn’t say but what you might see the very same this minute, over there in the bog, where your Honour sees the smoke risin’.

“ ’Tis only on the side of the road this way, that the Government has the slate houses built, an’ only for the acre of ground that is goin’ wid em, the won half of ’em would be empty this minute, for I’m toult by some that’s livin’ in ’em, that anything less than six in a bed would perish wid the could of ’em. Signs on,

'tis but small families you'll ever see in the same houses, as long as the childer do be comin' won at a time. The first will surely be perished before the second comes to keep the life in him. I can't rightly say whether that is the rason or not, but I know well that there was a dale finer min an' women rared in th' ould thatched houses, an' more of 'em. Fifty years ago there was a quare crowd livin' in this spot. They were all 'Squatters' an' ped nayther rint nor rates to any man. I dunno did the process-server ever call on 'em, but if he did, I know well he never kem back. The priest usen't to trouble 'em much ayther, an' although they had the blessed well an' the blessed tree (there was two trees at that time) in the middle of 'em, 'tis little prayers they ever said there. They were mostly all related to ache other, but a stranger could never tell that from their names, for 'tis by nicknames they mostly all wint. There was min there that time that didn't care for God, man or divil, an' 'twas said that if you wanted a murdher done for you in any part of Ireland, tis at 'Biddy's

tree' you'd get the man to do it, an' do it raysonable. 'Tis Saint Bridget that owns the well an' the tree, an' 'tis well known that the smallest kippin' you'd break off of that tree is able to quinch any fire you'd put it on. Only for that there wouldn't be a limb on it to-day, an' kindlin' so scarce. 'Twas true for me, whin I toult your Honour that there was people here once that didn't care for saint or divil, for didn't two of 'em make up their minds to stale the blessed trees won time? The way it happened was like this—

“It seems there was a wake goin' on where there was a dale of drink conshumed. 'Twas a could wet sason, an' the turf was bad an' smokey, an' there was no other kind of firin' in them times. The wake party was perished wid the could, in spite of what drink they had taken, an' half stifled wid the smoke, whin the biggest outlaw in the crowd lepped up an' said, 'May the divil carry me if I'll be perished here this way, while Biddy has two elegant trees above there at the well that would keep us in firin' for the whole winter. Come on, boys,' sez



he, 'an' we'll stale the makins of a fire from her.'

"As drunk as they were he could only get the one man as bad as himself to go wid him. They got a saw an' away wid the two of 'em. 'Twas a bright night, an' they weren't long fallin' the tree. Whin the people at the wake hard the fall they all ran out, an' seein' that no harm had come to them that did the deed, they ran up to the well to get their share of the firin'. But, glory be, what did they see before 'em but Saint Bridget sated on the trunk of the tree wid a crown of glory shinin' around her. Believe me, they weren't long runnin' back into the house, an' the two outlaws was the first of 'em. There was no stint in the drink, for they had a still below in the bog, so it wasn't very long till some of 'em got their courage back agin, an' the first outlaw was the bravest won among them.

"'Boys,' sez he, 'tis a shame for us to let ould Biddy hunt us in this way. I hope I'll never be warm till I'm warm in hell,' sez he, 'if I don't bring the makins of a fire in wid me. Who'll take the other end of the saw?' sez he.

Nobody volunteered for some time, but at last the same man that wint the first time said he'd chance it agin. Out wid 'em secondly agin, an' whin they got up to the well the first thing they saw was Saint Bridget sated on the tree, lookin' like as if she hadn't moved a hand or foot since they seen her last.

“ ‘Is it there you are still?’ said the first outlaw. ‘Well,’ sez he, ‘I suppose ’twould be a mortal sin to disturb a saint, so we’ll saw the tree at the two sides of you an’ lave you a nice comfortable block to sit on.’ So they did, but ’twas the sore sawin’ for ’em. They were the two ablest min that could be found around the bog, an’ the piece of timber they started to carry away wouldn’t be a load for won of ’em if it was natural, but wid th’ enchantment that was in it, it give the two of ’em enough to do to shoulder it, an’ it put ’em to their best, an’ more than their best, to carry it down to the road, but they did it at last.

“ The houses that was there thin was like th’ ould houses that’s there still, but lower down beneath the level of the road, an’ there was

steps goin' down to 'em. Now all the time while they were carryin' the load they noticed the light to be followin' 'em, but they never knew that Saint Bridget was afther 'em as well, till the first man started to go down the steps, when she gave him 'the hand an' leg' an' thrun him down from the top to the bottom an' half way in the door of the house. The timber hit him a puck on the back of the poll an' kilt him dead. All that was at the wake kem out to carry him in, an' whin they got back into the house they found all the candles quinched an' the corpse turned upside down on the table. Nothing happened to the second outlaw at that time, but the fright he got worked on his mind so much that he give himself up to the police for a murder that many people said he never did, but he was hanged in Cork all the same. I suppose the judge didn't like to miss a chance at a 'Biddy's tree' man. 'Tis seldom he got it. That ould ash tree that you see above there be the well is the comrade tree to the won that was cut, an' 'tis likely to be there durin' duration, for from that day to this a limb wasn't broke off



it an' they say that a crow itself won't pitch on it, no mather how tired of flyin' he'd be.

“There's only two or three of th' ould stock of 'Biddy's tree' people in it now, an' they're livin' below in the bog. You'll never see won of 'em living in the new hoises, for they should pay rint for 'em, an' that's what nayther they nor any one belongin' to 'em ever did. In spite of the bad name they had, there was a lot of dacincy among some of 'em, altho' they'd rather die than do a regular day's work. A dale of 'em had guns an' nets an' ferrets, so 'tis by poachin' by day an' maybe 'burnin' the river,' by night, they lived. There was won man there that acted very honourable be the ould masther above at the great house. His name was 'Dinny Dan.' I never hard any other name for him, but I dare say 'twas a nickname at the first go-off, that stuck to him. He was a great poacher, an' the wife was as good as himself for ferretin' an' spearin' salmon. 'Twas unknown what young foxes the two of 'em had stole an' sold out of the country, so th' ould master would a dale sooner meet a mad dog in his place than

ayther won of 'em. You must know how put about he was won day, whin Dinny walked into the stable yard to him, wid a bag over his shoulder.

“ ‘What have you there ? ’ sez he, very short, that way.

“ ‘I have a fox an’ two pups,’ sez Dinny.

“ ‘I suppose ’twas in won of me covers you got ’em,’ sez the masther.

“ ‘ ’Twas not, but in a ditch where I was ferretin’,’ sez Dinny.

“ ‘Show me the place an’ put ’em back in the same hole, an’ I’ll pay you for ’em,’ sez the masther.

“ ‘Come on,’ sez Dinny. Well, the two of ’em started off together, an’ afther walkin’ about two miles through the counthry, they kem to a big double ditch wid a dale of brambles on it. Dinny lepped up on it asy, but the masther after a struggle fell back into the dyke an’ couldn’t make his way out of the brambles.

“ ‘Gimme your hand,’ sez he to Dinny.

“ ‘I wouldn’t like to do it, sir,’ sez Dinny.

“‘I tell you, gimme your hand,’ sez the masther agin.

“‘Do you mane to say you’ll take me hand?’ sez Dinny.

“‘To be sure I do,’ sez the masther.

“Wid that he retched up an’ cot him be the hand an’ climbed up alongside of him on the ditch.

“‘Why didn’t you gimme your hand the first time I axed it?’ sez the masther. ‘Becos,’ sez Dinny, beginnin’ to cry, ‘there’s many people that sez there’s blood on that hand, an’ you’re the first man that took it these twenty years. An’ now,’ sez he, houldin’ up his hand above his head, ‘may this hand rot off of me if I ever meddle wid a fox agin.’

“I heard the masther to say afther, that while ‘Dinny Dan’ lived he kep his word an’ never stole or injured a fox agin, an’ that’s more than can be said by many that’s wearin’ red coats to-day.

“Do I believe in ghosts, is it? Why wouldn’t I believe in ’em? ’Tisn’t becos I’m all me life, night an’ day, wet an’ dry, drunk



an' sober, travellin' the road widout seein' won, that they wouldn't be there as thick as feathers on a goose. Some persons sees 'em an' others don't, an' 'tis the very same wid horses. I used to be drivin' a foxy mare for Quilty won time, that used to see 'em in the middle of the noon-day, an' the sun shinin' fit to blind you. She'd be travellin' her besht, an' a great warrant she had too to trot, whin all of a sudden, she'd stick her toes an inch into the road and 't isn't your heart alone she'd bring up into your mouth wid the sudden stop she'd give; an' if 'twas above on the drivin' sate you'd be, in place of on the side of the car, maybe 'tis out on her back you'd find yourself wid your teeth (if you had the like) druv down your throat be the rings of the hoosin'. Sure you know well there must be them on the road that I couldn't see to make her do that. I swapt her off wid another man that was drivin' in the same yard, for a horse that wasn't half as good as her, but he was blind, an' that was a great comfort to me.

“Anyhow there isn't the half, no nor the third part, of the ghosts an' sperrits that there

was in the ould times. Some persons say that 'twas the trains an' telegraphs that put the first scatter on 'em, an' I'm thinkin' meself that the motor-cars have the last of 'em hunted off the roads, wherever else they may be resortin'. From all accounts the class of ghosts that used to be goin' in th' ould times was different to what do be seen now. 'Tisn't screechin' nor booin' at you they'd be to frighten you, but to lep at you on a sudden an' ketch you be the throat an' choke you.

"I remember hearin' me grandfather (rest his sowl) tellin' me about 'Petticoat Loose,' that was the worst ghost that ever was in Ireland, an' the way she kem to be banished. It seems that there was a man from a place called Nad, that used to be carring on the road from there to Cork. He had a horse that was masther of two-ton weight whatever place you'd face him. Now, won day he tuk a load of buther into Cork; 'twas a long road, an' he knew 'twould be late in the night before he'd be back home agin, but he was well in the habit of travelin' the roads be night, an' was prepared for it.

I suppose you know that the only best wapon for a man to defend himself wid again' a ghost, is a black-handled pin-knife, an' if you'd wet the stone wid a drop of holy water whin you'd be puttin' the edge on it, there'd be no fear of you, supposin' you'd get time to use it. Of course in them dangerous times, every travellin' man knew the binifit of this, so the man from Nad had his knife in great order.

“ 'Twas late whin he left Cork, an' the night overtook him before he was half-way home, but there was a great moon, an' the horse knew the road as well as himself, so he stretched himself in the car an' took a kind of half-doze. All wint well an' good till they got a piece out on the mountain road, where there wasn't a house widin two or three miles of 'em, whin all of a sudden, the horse whipped around, an' started back towards Cork at a hand gallop. Be the time the man had his sinses gothered, an' the reins cot, he was a quarther of a mile back. He turned round agin, but he had to bate the horse every step up to where he got the fright.

“ Whin he kem up to the place what should



he see but a woman sated on the side of the road, wid her apron over her head, like she'd be cryin'.

“ ‘What are you doin' there,’ sez the man to her, ‘in a lonesome place like this at this time o' night?’ If he mightn't spake to her she could never interfere with him, for of course it was ‘Petticoat Loose.’

“ ‘I'm a long ways from home,’ sez she.

“ ‘What way are you goin'?’ sez the man.

“ ‘Wesht,’ sez she.

“ ‘I'll give you a lift so,’ sez he.

“ Wid that she got into the car.

“ ‘Gwan out of that!’ sez the man to the horse.

“ Well, such draftin' an' drawin' you never see as the poor horse had! 'Twas only at the third or fourth attimpt he was able to start the car. After goin' a small piece the man turned to the woman, an' sez he: ‘What in the world ails the horse, he's the masther of two ton any place you'd face him, an' now look at the state of him wid shweat, an' only the two of us in the car?’

“Whin he said this to the woman, what did she do but rise up her right arm above his head, an’ lave a groan out of her that started the shweat on the poor man as bad as the horse.

“‘Do you see that hand?’ sez she. ‘It weighs two tons. ’Twas wid it I kilt me mother, an’ now I must kill you, for the divil has his claws on me till I’ll sind him tin thousand sowls wid their sins on ’em, an’ I’m not much short of the number now.’

“’Twas the long speech she med that saved the poor man’s life, for it give him time to get the knife out of his trouser pocket. He hit her a belt of it. I couldn’t rightly say in what place he struck her. There was a noise that had the nature of thunder in it, an’ a smell like you’d be stiflin’ bees. The load left the car, the horse ran away, an’ the poor man got a wakeness, and knew no more till the horse stopped at his own door.

“Whin they heard the car comin’, the women kem to the door to meet him, an’ thinkin’ he was drunk lifted him out an’ tuk him into the kitchen. The first word the wife

said to him was: 'I knew well you wouldn't put Christmas over you widout losing the pledge!' But when she smelled to his breath, she found that in place of too much whisky 'twas from the want of it he was sufferin'. So she gave him a sup, an' that brought him to, so that he was able to tell his story. They got such a fright over it that they were in dread to go to bed, but sted up sayin' Rosaries till mornin'. Soon after day, won of 'em got courage an' wint out to get some groceries that was in the car, an' 'twas thin she saw the sight. In the very middle of the car there was about the full of your hat of a black jelly, like the nature of frog-spawn, an' the black-handled pin-knife standin' up in the cintre of it.

"What was in the house ran off wid themselves in won body, an' never stopped till they got the priest an' brought him back wid 'em, an' whin he saw what was there, he got two more of the clergy to help him. No person ever rightly knew what they said or did, but 'twas commonly reported that they never stopped till they put the jelly into the Red Say, where all ghosts, speritts,



an' thim that do be dalin' wid the divil, will be for Secula Seculorum.

“ There's many a poor person livin' in lonesome, mountainy places, that would get but little aise, pace, nor quiteness, from ghosts, an' 'good people,' only for the cock that they puts sleepin' over the door. Sure, the whole worruld knows that ever since the day that the cock give the lie to Saint Pether, he has great power over the divil, an' all belongin' to him. Nothin' bad can pass under him unbeknown to him, an' at the very first crow he'll lave out of himself, all speritts an' ghosts must make off for Limbo, or some other place like it. Whinever you'll hear the cock to crow at an onsasonable hour, you may depind your life that he's mindin' his own business, an' defindin' the house for you. There's many a quare thing in this world that no person can understand, and won of the quarest is, that while there is nothin' but good to be got out of a crowin' cock, there is nothin' but divilmint an' misfortune to be got out of a crowin' hin.

“ I remember well won Sunday mornin', whin I was a good big lump of a gorsoon, we were all

atin' our breakwisht, me father an' meself an' eight or nine more of the childer, wid me mother above at the ind of the table takin' a cut off of a loaf of bread, whin in walked a big black hin an' began crakin' like won would be goin' to lay an egg, but 'twasn't eggs was troublin' the same hin, for what did she do but walk up near me mother an' stretch herself up like a cock, an' lave a crow out of herself, an' for fear won wouldn't do she left two more hand runnin' an' clapped her two wings together over her back. Well, me poor mother nearly got a strong wakeness out of the fright she got, but not so me father. He lepped up an' slapped out the door an' comminced huntin' the hin round the house. He pult the tail out of her the first grasp he med, an' 'twas inside in the bed he cot her afther.

“The very minute he had her cot, he twishted the neck on her, an' thrun her out the door. An' indeed we didn't get her to ate ayther, for he followed her out an' dug a hole an' put her into it, an' 'tis well I remimber to see me mother takin' two burnt sticks an'

makin' a cross of 'em, an' puttin' it down on the hin to keep her from risin'. But 'twas all no good for 'em. Misfortune was travellin' towards the house that same time. I had a sister that was seven years older than meself; she was in America, an' a great gerrul she was for writin' lethers, an' sindin' money three or four times every year. Sometimes as much as four or five pounds together in won slap. Well, the very next mornin' afther the hin givin' the performance, me mother called in at the post office an' there was a lether before her. Of course the first thing she did was to open it, lookin' for the money. The divil a thing was in it but writin'. The poor mother was no scholar an' wouldn't like to give the neighbours the satisfaction of knowin' what throuble was in it, so 'tis into her breast she put the lether, an' there she kep' it till her sister's husband's brother's son that used to be answerin' Mass, kem in an' read it for her. The news was bad. Briddy was married to a black. She said he was a Christian, but 'twas hard to believe it. Anyhow we never agin saw the colour of her money, ayther black or white.



“The first thing me father said whin he hard the news was—

“ ‘ ’Tis a pity we didn’t ate the hin.’ But me mother would never give in to that, for, says she, ‘How do you know but if we did, it might be the will of God we’d all turn black? an’ surely won in the family is enough.’ The poor woman was greatly upsot about what might happen to her, afther the great fright she got from the black hin, an’ the black man, but, indeed, she needn’t for whin the baby kem, ’twas foxy like the rest of us.”

## CHAPTER XXIII

### POLITICS

“WHAT’S that you’re sayin’? Why do I call the mare ‘Molly Maguire’? Becos she’s a treatcherous divil that would hit you a belt of a kick an’ you comin’ out of the stall afther feedin’ her, an’, moreover, she used to belong to Devlin that keeps the Hibernian Hotel. She never got the chance to kick him, for he took dam’d good care to make others feed her, an’ kep’ her workin’ for him day an’ night.

“But to the divil I pitch all their politics. Willie O’Brien is th’ only dacint man among ’em, an’ th’ only won that isn’t in dread of his own shadow or that’s worth the four hundred a year, an’ he don’t want it. It’s a dam’d few of ’em that’ll ever touch four hundred a year agin.

“Why so? Every why so. ’Twas all very fine for me an’ the like of me to be givin’ me

vote for friendship or maybe for spite—an' there's often more done for spite than love of your neighbour in this counthry—but now that there's so much money mixed up in the business, indeed I must get me own share, and the district counsillor must get a bit, an' surely it won't do to forget the Church.

“Believe me, whin all calls are met, if there's a hundred a year for th' M.P. he'll be very thankful for it, an' isn't that a fine thing for won that never had the like before ?

“How'll they arrange that? For fear the counthry isn't paved with Gombeen men ready an' willin' to put a mortgage on the salary the day afther M.P. do be put behind the name that signs it.

“'Twas a mortal sin there wasn't a contist at the last election we had, afther all th' ammunition they had laid in. I'm toult won woman sould over five hundred 'resolvers' for six-and-sixpence a-piece in a town to the wesht of us; they're all armed there, even the childer.

“A very dacint man tould me a quare story yesterday about that very thing. It seems he



had a gorsoon about tin years of age that do be takin' the milk to the Cramery in an ass cart. He started him off as usual won mornin' an' seen him go down the bohereen an' turn out into the public road. 'Twasn't many minutes afther till here he comes runnin' back as hard as he could. The poor man of course ran down the bohereen to meet him, sayin' to himself—

“ ‘He surely have the car capsized an' all me milk is gone to glory.’ He screeched out at him, ‘What ails you?’ ”

“ ‘Nothin', sir,’ sez the gorsoon, ‘but I forgot me resolver. What a fool I'd be to face the Cramery widout it an' every “Mollie” there havin' his gun in his pocket! What a nice look you'd give at me if you see me comin' back like Patsy Clancy kem back th' other mornin' wid his finger stuck in the hole that won of 'em was afther shootin' through the milk tankard an' more than half the milk afther spoutin' out before he thought of doin' that same!’ ”

“There was great canvassin' at the last gineral election. I had no sinse; I gev me vote away very soft entirely airly in the day.

“I knew won poor man that lives in a labourer’s cottage—be the same token he’s an evicted tinant that never done a day’s work in his life—that was compelled to hould on to his vote till the very last. He was ‘All for Ireland,’ but the wife was ‘All for herself,’ an’, indeed, the very first look you’d take at the same woman you’d know that if there was anything to be got ’tis she’d get it an’ not Ireland; she’s won of those bither little women that mightn’t say much, but what she’d say would pinetrate.

“Indeed, if there were many women like her there’d be but little talk of Suffragettes burnin’ houses to get votes; she’d show ’em an aisier way than that, an’ every vote they’d get would count two for it ’d be took away from a man. She had every second visit from ‘Mollies’ an’ ‘All for Ireland’s,’ an’ in the latter end of the day she gev the vote to both of ’em, an’, indeed, I don’t suppose she gev it for nothin’, but nayther side got much binifit out of the bargain, for she put the husband to bed in place of lavin’ him go to the poll.

“Isn’t it a quare thing that there’s nothin’

in this world, not even the drink itself, that's able to make such porridge of a man's brains as shoutin' an' roarin' an' wavin' a hat?

"Whin I used to be drivin' Quilty's ould wagonette to elections an' it full up of M.P.'s an' C.C.'s an' P.P.'s wid maybe two corner boys armed wid a drum an' a bugle, 'tis often I noticed very steady, cool, sinsible min in the crowd, min that I knew to be timperate an' that were fit to buy or sell any two of the haroes that I had in me load. Well, it wouldn't be tin minutes afther the speech an' the shoutin' an' hat wavin' began till they'd be the biggest eejuts in the crowd, an' maybe five shillins worth of a hat gone from 'em for ever. An' all the time not won of 'em knowin' what the talk was about any more than I did that was in the wagonette along wid all the knowledge an' couldn't tell you was it Frinch, Latin, or Kanturk they were talkin'. Sound is a dale bether an' goes farther than sinse in a speech.

"Wait a while till all the three factions of 'em will be shut up together in the won house in Stephen's Green. 'Tis then you'll hear music.



If John Redmond has sinse, the first thing he'll do is to lay steam on in the House of Commons, an' have an engineer for Spaker that can blow the whistle whenever five or six Mimbers do be tangled in won another. Believe me, the stoker must mind his job well, or he'll run out of steam at the first sittin'. I don't rightly know how many Redmondites there'll be, or what titles they'll have, but whether they're Chancellors or Councillors, or only blood relations, 'tis surely the same pay they must get, for isn't won man as good as another, an' a damn sight bether, as long as he isn't a Protestant, or an O'Brienite.

“There's fine times comin' for the like of me that have nothin' but me vote. They can't tax that nor what I'll get for it. After all, there's but little harm in taxes. Isn't it as aisy to start a 'Plan of Campaign' agin 'em as 'twas agin the rint, an' aisier, for we know now how to wark the like bether than we did? I hear some people sayin'—but I hardly believe it—that there's goin' to be a dale of money saved by-and-bye be sackin' all the Peelers an' R. M.'s an' most of the Judges. I hope 'tis true for 'em. Who'll

we have to contind wid thin but the process-server, an' the dear knows we're not much in dread of him as it is, an' a damn'd bad appetite the same man has this minute for atin' a writ. The farmers are between two minds this minute whether 'tis agin the Government Installmints or agin the Rates that they'll make the first strike. My advice to 'em is to attack the small thing first, and that's the Installmints, for surely the Rates 'll be bigger than the rint, an' the Collector nearer to 'em than the British Army.

“'Twill be the quare sight whin we see Redmond and Dillon workin' the batherin' ram an' Devlin readin' the Riot Act at the first Home Rule eviction. They'll have a strong army to back 'em too, wid all the family connections that'll be waitin' for their salaries till the Rates is collected. 'Tis many a won of 'em will be sayin', 'God be wid ould times, whin we could order the Peelers an' their batons to the front, an' maybe hit 'em a cruist of a stone ourselves, afther they had the dirty wark done for us.'

“From this out we'll have a dale more

elections than we used to have; so a man's vote will be a valuable property to him. The class of man they're electin', as a rule, will never have the constitution to stand the salary. Did you ever reckon up how many gallons of whisky goes to a hundred pounds?

"I knew won M.P. that died of a quare disease. 'Twas his sister's weddin' that kilt him. She was married on a Thursday. He sted in what you might call the joviality of drink till Sunday. He wint from that into the horrors of it, an' died a woeful death on Friday. The man that was elected in place of him is a rale dacent sort when he's sober. I hope he'll keep away from weddins for a while. The neighbours were all very plazed th' other day when he used his influence to get a gintleman—a rale gintleman I mane—med an M.P. 'Twas this way it happened. His cook was first cousin to the mimber, an' she said if he'd raise her wages she'd do what she could for him. So she did. I'm toul't she's under a month's notice, but maybe 't isn't true.

"Whatever else Home Rule may do it can't give us quarer J.P.'s than some we have this



minute. I know won an' 't isn't to say that he can nayther read nor write, but he couldn't tell you which ind of the pin to dip in th' ink. Himself and th' R.M. had the binch all to themselves th' other day, when a ruffian of a tramp was brought up before 'em, that was afther breakin' into a cottage an' batin' a poor ould woman becos she had no whisky to give him. Th' R.M. is very fond of hearin' himself talk, an' was makin' a very solemn spache, like a judge that would be goin' to hang a man, when up lepped the J.P. 'Aisy, Major, aisy,' sez he. 'This is no case for won of your hard sintences. It seems to me that this poor man was only out on a common drunken spree the same as you or me might be.'

"Th' R.M. got very mad an' gev the tramp the full contints of the law.

"'Tis a wise man could tell how this Home Rule is going to work whin they gets it. Won sure thing is that they'll have to put such a tax on whisky an' porther that it'll be riz out of the reach of nine-tinths of the voters, so they'll be in their sober sinses on th' election day. No

person could tell what way a sober man might vote. We have no experience of it in this district anyhow.

“Here’s out of it. I have me mind med up to sell the car an’ get a grip on th’ ould age pinsion while ’tis there. Decayed M.P.’s might be gettin’ it all by-an’-bye. God be wid ould times. ’Tis many the long cowl’d drive I tuk your Honour whin a mile wouldn’t seem the length of me whip, the way you’d be talkin’ to me. What! Me talkin’! Sure the worruld knows I never sez a word only what I sez to the mare. I hope this is the last drive I’ll take you for I wouldn’t like to be takin’ you the last drive of all wid the feathers over you.”

THE END

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